

DIDSBURYE

IN THE '45.

BY FLETCHER MOSS,
AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES
REMINISCENCES, AND
LEGENDS OF DIDSBURY."



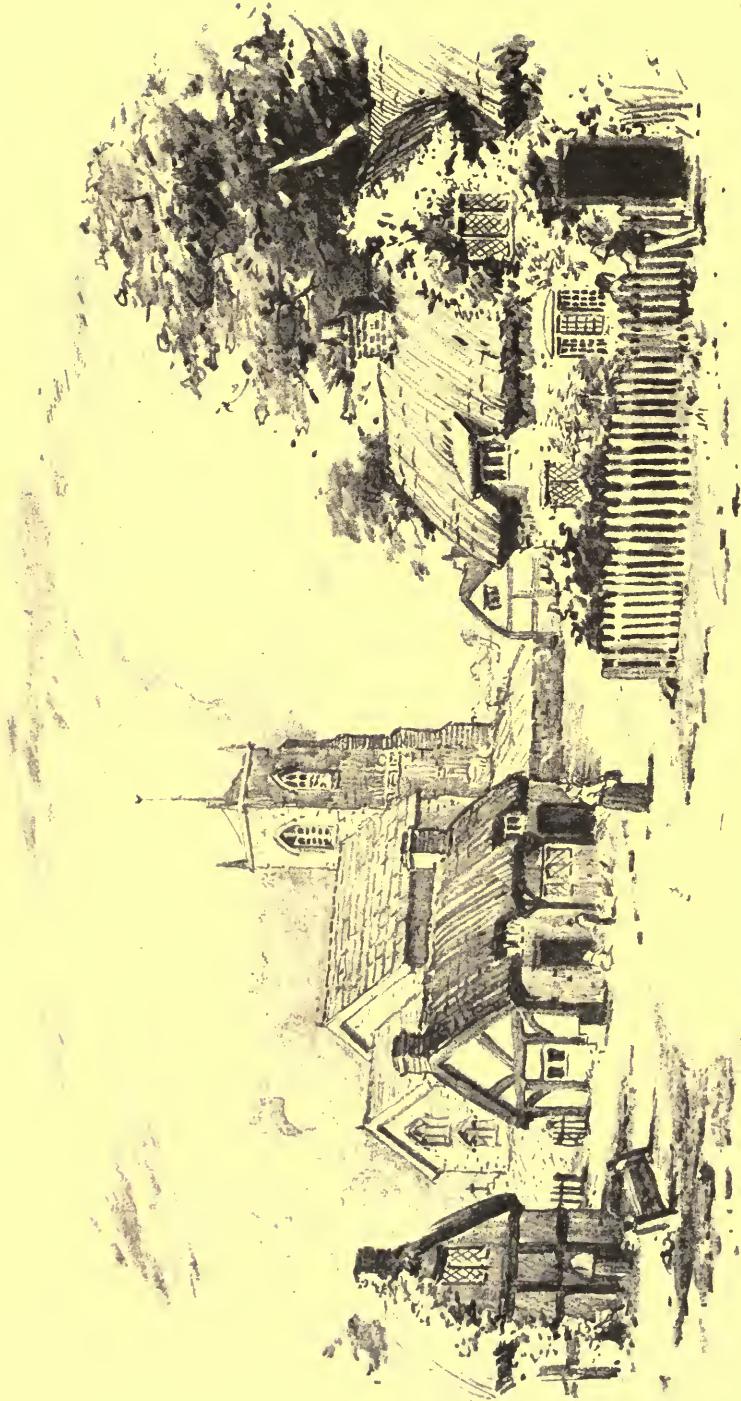
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Didisburye in the '45.



DIDISBURVE IN 1745.

AN IMAGINARY SKETCH, ACCORDING TO THE TRADITIONS OF THE ELTERS.

DIDSBURYE

IN THE '45.

BY

FLETCHER MOSS,
THE OLD PARSONAGE, DIDSBURY,

AUTHOR OF
"SKETCHES, REMINISCENCES, AND LEGENDS OF DIDSBURY."

With Illustrations.

MANCHESTER :
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY	I
THE VILLAGE FESTIVAL. SAINT'S DAY	12
THE WAKES. COCKING AT YE COCK	29
UNDER WHICH KING?	53
DIDSBURYE'S GLIMPSE OF WAR	73
THE TURN OF THE TIDE	86
THE KING'S PLEASURE. THE MARTYR'S CROWN	99
APPENDIX	123
THE PRESS CRITICISMS OF DIDSBURY	135





ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
DIDISBURY IN 1745	<i>Frontispiece</i>
BRADSHAW HALL	4
GAME COCK	43
MOSSELEY MONUMENT	72
TEMPLE BAR, WITH THE MARTYR'S HEADS	116
GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDDAUGHTER	121





INTRODUCTORY.

“Love thou thy land—with love
Far brought from out the storied past.”



OVE thou thy land: the land in our case being that bit of old England called Didsbury, and the storied past being that small speck on the ocean of the eternity that is past, the end of the year called 1745.

The interest aroused in the history of Didsbury by the *Legends and Reminiscences* already published has encouraged me to write more on the same subject, and as it was a surprise and pleasure to me to find when collecting those legends how many of them related to the year 1745 (the fatal '45 as it has been called), I have hunted up anything I could find referring to that period; and as at this lapse of time it is difficult, if not impossible, to know what is true and what is not true, I have embodied the details in a narrative which will to some extent show the manners and customs

of the period, and of which, though the subsidiary parts are imaginative, the main details are historical and strictly true.

The frontispiece of this book—a drawing of the Church and surrounding old houses—is an attempt to depict them according to the old descriptions, all that is left of that period being part of the tower. The ornaments now on the tower were erected about 1804, and the clock was added many years after that date.

The parish of Didsbury in 1745 included all the township of Heaton up to Stockport the market town, also Reddish, Levenshulme, Ladybarn, Fallowfield, a part of Moss Side, a small part of Longsight, Burnage, Withington, and Didsbury. Barlow Moor and Heaton Mersey were not separate townships; they are simply the names of modern districts.

The spelling of the name has altered so often that it was very doubtful which was the correct spelling at any time previous to the last hundred years.

Since writing the historical sketches of Didsbury, I have found the following mention of the place. It is dated from the reign of Philip and Mary:—Thomas Cholleton, chyrchreeve of y^e chapell of Dyddesburye, sworne and examyned, deposeth and sayeth y^t there y^s ij lytell bells spefyfied in y^e said sedule yett remayning at y^e said chapell, w^{ch} were ceased to th' use of our late souraigne lorde Kynge Edward y^e vith by auctorytie of y^e said form co^myss. This shows that about 1555 the official form of spelling was Dyddesburye. By another official mention of the name we learn that it was Diddesbury in 1650. The registers of the Church spell it Didisburie in 1599. Then it is Didis-

burye, Didisburie, or Didsburie for some time, according to the fancy of the writer. Our hurrying life may perhaps cause us to contract the name still further and call it Dids. Of the various forms used about 1745, I think Didisburye is the most picturesque; and here I should like to mention some rampant criticism of my suggested derivation of the word, for it is very amusing. I have been gravely informed that the word Didsbury is derived from a great battle having been fought by some Saxon Dukes on Duke's hillock, and that after the battle they Did Bury the dead there and made the hillock, "and the brooks ran red with the blood of the slain." The fact of the title Duke not being a Saxon title is a minor matter to our village critics; but the idea of Didsbury being derived from the fact that they Did bury them is sublime in its simplicity.

There is an error in my work on Didsbury, in the description of the old part of the Church. The oldest stone-work is at the south-west (not north-west) corner near to the tower.

I have been sorry to find the churchwardens' accounts for the year 1745 are missing. They were safe not very long since, but a warden or sidesman has had the old documents away from the Church for months, and now that I particularly wished for the wardens' accounts for the '45 they are not to be found.

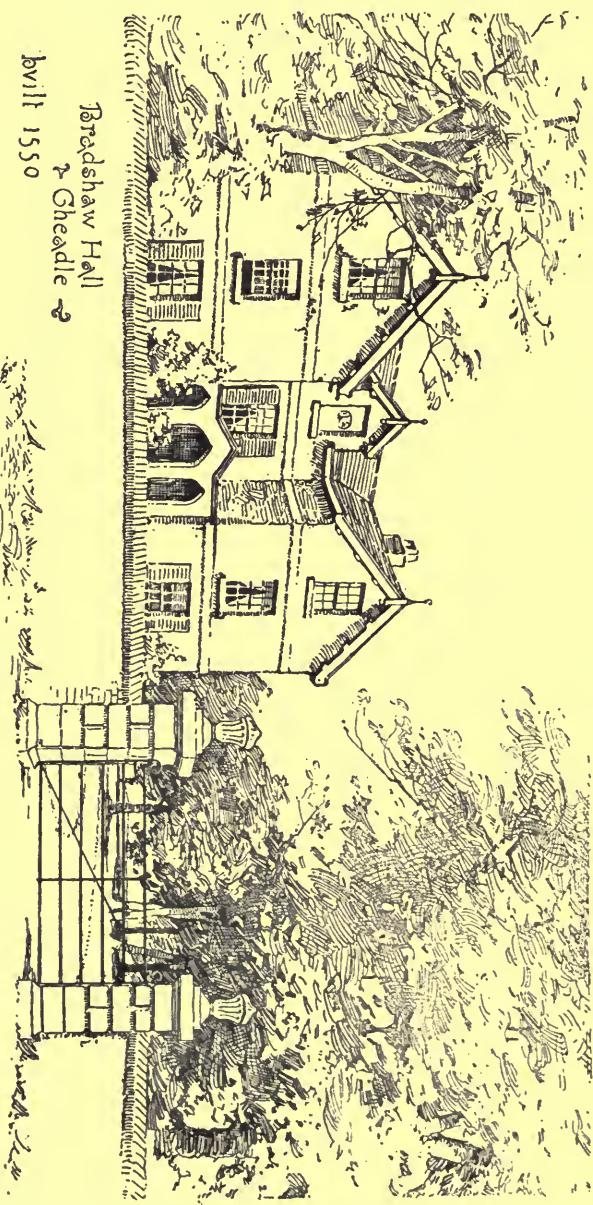
There are very few houses now standing in the parish that were standing in 1745. The middle part of the old Parsonage would be one of these exceptions, and the old part of Lawnhurst, that is even now being taken down. Several of the farmhouses and cottages are of older date, and though, as usually happens, the farmsteads

change the least, the old-fashioned thatched roofs are so much more expensive, now that labour is dear and there is a value in straw, that even the old buildings have in some cases modern roofs of slate.

The oldest houses (a few of which remain in the neighbourhood) were made by rearing up two roughly-shaped trunks of trees with their ends on the ground about twelve feet apart, and their tops joined, thereby forming the gable end ; something like a gothic arch. Then the wooden framework was completed, being generally composed of oaken beams pegged together, and the spaces were filled in by wattle and daub, that is, wicker-work and clay, or, in later years, by bricks, the whole being well thatched. In many respects thatch is the best roof a house can have, for it is warm in winter, and cool in summer, but it is now expensive and old-fashioned. The floors were then of mud, or of bricks, and the windows were very small, the poorer houses being without glass altogether.

The names of the people in the imaginary dialogues are the names of families who were living in the parish of Didsbury in 1745, and as some of their descendants are still living in the neighbourhood, I hope they will not be aggrieved at anything I have written, for I merely wish to describe the place and men as I conceive them to have been.

The only criticism at all adverse to my book on Didsbury that is worth noticing is to the effect that it is rather hard on certain persons, and rather too much of a family history. As this book may be liable to the same complaint, I will merely ask how can it be otherwise? If



BRADSHAW HALL, THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE AUTHOR'S GRANDFATHER, JOSEPH FLETCHER. JOHN FLETCHER, THE FATHER OF JOSEPH, WAS COUSIN TO THE CAPTAIN FLETCHER WHOSE HEAD WAS SPIKED UP ON TEMPLE BAR FOR HIS SHARE IN THE DEEDS OF THE '45.



anyone writes history, is he to write the truth or to write "smooth things" only? In my former book, acting under legal advice, I suppressed several facts very disparaging to dignitaries of the parish. But if too much is suppressed the book would be emasculated and not true. Also, if there are facts in the history of Didsbury relating to myself or to my family, it is simply recording the history to relate them, and it would not have been complete in many cases without them. The amount of people who have been interested in the pedigree of the Fletchers is surprising. People I had known for years, and others I had never heard of, have asked me for further particulars. If Fletcher was not the name of the enquirer, it had been the maiden name of his mother, or of his wife, or of his mother-in-law. One old friend claimed relationship because his grandmother had been a Chorlton, and he had noticed the record of a marriage between a John Fletcher and a Joane Chorleton. I said to him, "But that marriage was about 1600, and your grandmother could not have been living then." "Oh," said he, "that does not matter, it's only a bit further back." There is no lack of poor relations for a many of us, and poverty is no crime, though it is sometimes inconvenient. An unsavoury Irish woman calling herself Mrs. Smith, and whose thirst was not for knowledge only, called and claimed relationship; but a line had to be drawn somewhere, and the old advertisement ending with the phrase, "No Irish need apply," suggested where a stand might be made. It may interest some of the pedigree hunters to know that the earliest authentic record of the name of ffletcher that I can find in the district is of the date 1386. In the Raines MSS. there is a copy of a deed, as

follows: "J^o le ffletcher capell ded Ric fil Rob le Hunt omnia burg tenem in Manchester, &c. 9 Ric. II." The translation being, "John the fletcher (or arrower), priest, gave to Richard the son of Robert the Hunt all that burgage or house or tenement in Manchester, &c. Witnessed by Ralph de Radclif, John de Ashton, Richard de Holland, Hugh de Moston, Richard de Redish." As the gentleman was a priest, he should not have left any descendants; but as I have signed the name of John Fletcher many many thousands of times, after a lapse of five hundred years and in the same town, it is interesting to me to republish the small document, and doubtless will be so to others of the name of Fletcher.

The long connection of our family with the corn and provision trades will enable me to give some original information about the food of the people in former times. The food was generally such as no ordinary working man would eat to-day. It mainly consisted of barley bread or oatcake, with skim-dick cheese or reisty bacon as a treat. Wheaten bread was only for the richer folk, and in wet seasons they had to go without it, for the simple reason that in a wet harvest or cold wet summer the wheat in our district does not ripen, and the flour made from it will not make bread. The bread is simply sticky dough that will not rise, and the crumb of a loaf shrinks up into a lump and rattles about inside the crust, like a corpse does in a coffin, the old women used to say. This I have known several times in my lifetime, the two worst years being 1860 and 1879. If similar wet harvests and wet summers had occurred a hundred years since, there would have been a grievous famine, and the poor would have had to eat bread made of acorns or

even beech mast mixed with their oatmeal. Cattle and pigs were never fit to kill excepting in the autumn, for they were “bags of bones” in the spring, gradually fattening with a favourable summer, and at the approach of winter all were killed that were not reserved for breeding. As salt was scarce and dear they were not all salted, but were hung in the smoke and dried, and some of this hung beef was like mahogany. If a cow or calf was killed to save its life in the spring or summer, the family or neighbours would live on it till it was finished.

As another bit of family history relates to this important matter of the food for the people, I may here mention that about the beginning of this century my grandfather Fletcher had a shop and warehouse at New Cross, Manchester, where on one Saturday afternoon they scaled out (that is, they weighed in retail quantities on the scales) forty loads of barley meal that was bought for food by poor people. It was in the cellars of this warehouse that he hid his children, my mother being the youngest of them, when the place was besieged during bread riots or on the day of Peterloo.

I now have a sales book from there, showing the prices of flour and other things for some years. About 1812 was the dearest time. Flour was then £6 to £7 per sack, oatmeal nearly the same, bread fourteen pence the loaf, and probably such bread as no one would eat nowadays. Who would eat barley meal now, or even oatmeal? and yet oatmeal was largely sold in the trade thirty years since. The “yellow male” or Indian corn meal came into use for a time at the Irish famine, and was used during the high prices of the Crimean war time; but, excepting in

workhouses, there is very little oatmeal, or Indy meal, or “yallow male,” as the Irish call it, used now, and in the workhouse the two meals have to be mixed or the inmates object.

I might also explain that the word ale formerly meant the beverage produced mainly from good malted barley; it was stronger, richer, and better in every way than the beer, which was the inferior quality, thinner and sourer, such as would cause the ordinary Manchester police sergeant of the present day to lose a stone in weight in a week. The good old nut-brown ale was the special drink of the Tories; the swipey beer, or whistle bally vengeance, as it was technically termed, was supposed to be good enough for the Whigs; in wet seasons it was often thin and tart, inasmuch as it was sometimes used as a remedy for worms, the afflicted patient being told, “If thou willt only tak enoo of it, if it doesn’t kill th’ worms it will kill thee.”

The consumption of ale at the village festivals was enormous, though it is probable the consumption of intoxicating liquor on the whole was not so great then as it is now, for spirits were seldom taken. The labourer or working man worked for longer hours and for less wages than he does now; the wages were also given to him at fewer times; therefore he very seldom had any money, and he seldom had any time to go on the spree. When the opportunity came, as at The Wakes, The Harvest Home, Christmas, or other feasts, then he often drank deep; but experience has shown that the more modern fashion of continual soaking on small nips is infinitely more injurious than the older fashion of a good burst at intervals. The harvest home was

formerly the next great annual festival to the wakes. It was a feast given by the gentry or farmers to their servants at the end of the harvest. The feast consisted of a good meat supper with ale, and songs afterwards. Roast goose and stuffing, with plenty of beef, were the chief dishes. In our time, when the harvest festival consists of a tea in the schoolroom, with tickets at so much per head, and a sermon in church with the inevitable collection, the British workman sighs for the time he has known or heard of, when he had plenty of goose and plenty of beef, with nut-brown ale brought in to the tune of

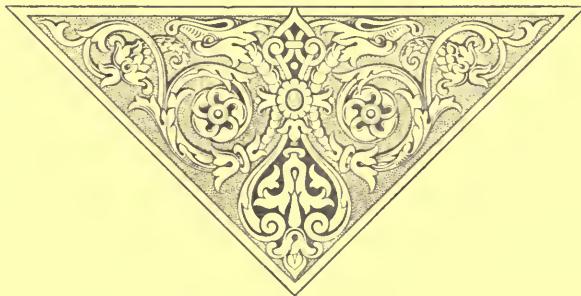
Nimble Ned comes dancing in
With a jug of ale so brown and prim;
Come fill your glasses to the brim,
To welcome Harvest Home, Home, Home,
To welcome Harvest Home.

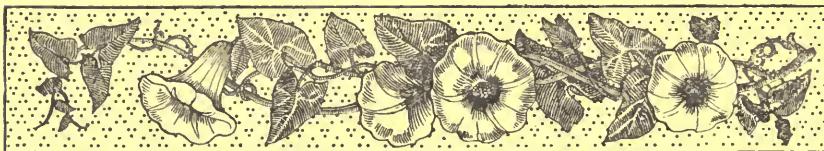
Life was not all beer and skittles for the men in those days. Their clothes mainly consisted of leather breeches and a smock frock, with a strong pair of boots. Shirts and stockings were not common; collars and ties were unknown; even caps or hats were not always worn by the farm labourers. Their clothes were sometimes put on and never taken off until they began to tumble in pieces. I have known a man in Didsbury working in a coarse ragged shirt, who told me "he should ne'er tak it off as long as it would howd toghither." A good pair of leather breeches were really supposed to pass from father to son as an heirloom. The test of a good pair was to try if they would stand upright of themselves when nobody was in them; if they would do so they were good, strong stuff, and likely to last for a many years. My father remembered a 'prentice lad coming to his father, whose fond

mother had provided him with such a pair, and they were the means of a "vast of fun" in a game that is unknown in these days, that is, for the boys to set the breeches upright and then jump into them without touching them with the hands. It was probably a pair of these stiff leather breeches that the Windsor boy was wearing when George III. asked him if he did not know he was the king. "Yes," said the boy. "Then why don't you go on your knees, and you might kiss the king's hand (or his foot)?" said the king. "Because I'd spoil my breeches," said the boy. In those days they liked their breeches as they liked their slices of beef when I went to school, "some that wouldn't bend." There is no doubt that a groom or gardener in the present day is better dressed and better fed than a yeoman or gentleman was in the days of our great grandfathers, that is, in the middle of last century. The dress had to be strong and also well cared for, or the servants would have been naked, for the men living in the house only got £5 a year wages, the women servants only the half of that amount, and the boys or girls received nothing excepting perhaps some clothes.

In concluding this preface, I wish the reader to understand that any obsolete or archaic word or idiom is written down as I have heard it spoken, the spelling being phonetic. Also that I have purposely abstained from consulting any glossary, or giving any explanation of the meaning of words, and therefore the words are given with as much of their original native meaning as they can have. For the information of anyone studying the dialect, I had better mention that Didsbury is on the border of Cheshire, and I consider

the dialect to be more appertaining to Cheshire than to Lancashire. At the beginning of my former work on the legends, &c., of the place, I advanced as a probable theory that the original Saxon settlers of Deddesbur'h came from Eddisbury, the great Saxon settlement in Cheshire. The market town and the court town for the district was always Stockport, not Manchester, and the dialect of the natives has always seemed to me a Cheshire "talk."





THE VILLAGE FESTIVAL.

SAINT OSWALD'S DAY, ANNO DOMINI 1745. AT THAT ANTIENT INNE
KNOWN BY Y^E SYGNE OF Y^E COCK IN DIDISBURYE.

A quart of ale is a dish for a king.—*Autolycus*.



“I me a quart o' ale, if yo pleaseñ, missus, and a mon
to threeup wi.”

“Yo may soon have the ale; and as for a mon
to threeup wi, there's old John Rudd yonder, coming
across th' shooting butts, he'll threeup wi ye till
th' cows come up.”

“He tunna threeup sense; some folk talken such rubbitch and such
a lot on it; gi me a mon whose disscourse is instructive-like, not one o'
them who talken an talken an talken, so as other folk canna get a word
in edgeways; they'd moyther a growing tree wi their talk.”

“Well, there's the old moudywarp man in th' kitchen. I hear tell
that last time clerk Wood paid him for the moudywarps he'd fetcht, he
marked some wi a pin and thrut em on th' esshole unbeknownst to old

Tippetymew, and the force old beggar fetcht em off again and tried to get pay twice over for the same moudywarpes, but he got cotcht."*

"Well, well, there's roguery in aw trades but oursen."

"There's a voyager just coming in; he favvers a black Jesuit more than owt else. Will he suit you?"

"Happen he will. Let's see what he's after."

The above interesting conversation between Mistress Twyford, the hostess of the "Cock," and her customer, was here interrupted by the sudden entry of the church cleaner, Betty Gaskill, who was a prolific woman with a large appetite and a continual thirst.

"Lorjus me!"† she exclaimed, "what d'ye think? When we was clearing th' ould rushes from th' church there came a skinny black-looking chap, who flops down on his knees up at th' top end of the church by the communion table, and stays there prayin and crossin hissel, and doesn't tak a bit o' notice o' any on us. We got Wood's lads to get some brick ends to pelt him wi when he came out, but, somehow they were fair gloppent, as if he'd bin a frightenin or a boggut. Here comes th' ould ——."

"Can I have a little food and rest here awhile?" said the stranger.

"Aye, you can have such as the house provides, and welcome," said the hostess, "and there's a very worthy man here, a horse-leech by profession, who's just been aksin for some one to hold him in

*In olden times the clerks paid for all moles, sparrows, &c., &c., that were supposed to be vermin, and were brought to him killed. About this time, in a neighbouring parish, one thousand three hundred and twenty moles were paid for in one year, £11.

†"Lorjus me," or "Lorjus mercy," was an old-fashioned exclamation, being a contraction of "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me."

disscoorse. What would you like in the way of food? That that's handiest is oaten cake and cheese. Of course there's other things—pig's head, black puddings, and the like, but the cheese is made i' th' parish,* and there's no better i' aw Cheshire, for a bit o' the parish is in Cheshire, yo may know, and th' best cheese i' th' world comes fro there, that nice blue mould; and as for th' ale, I brews it myself, and, though I says it as shouldn't, there's——”

“Aye, she does,” put in the old horse-leech; “she brews just the same measures o' mawt whether she fills hafe a dozen hogsheads or as many kilderkins. Aw the empties a got to be filled, chus how mony there is.”

“Ne'er heed him, he must be joking.”

“The cheese and oaten cake are abundance for me,” said the stranger, “and if you will let me have some of your best ale, also, perhaps this gentleman will join me.”

“Aye, that will I, and welcome. I'll tak another quart, and thank ye; one canner properly tell from th' first quart what it's like, and missus dunna swilker it. Here's my respects.”

“To whom have I the honour of speaking?” said the stranger.

“Oh, my name's ffletcher, George ffletcher, but they caw me Dicky for short, cos there's so mony on us. There's old George, o' th' Woodhouse, him as is lately dead, and there's his son George, and there's me and a young George from the Fould who's living in Manchester, and there's others, and heaps o' Johns and Toms; we're a rare breed for breeding, though they're mostly wenches that's come lately.”

* There is now a large stone in the garden of the old parsonage that was formerly used as a cheese press in Didsbury.

"Then the George ffletcher, of Heaton Wood, who was church-warden, is dead, is he?"

"Well, they buried him on spec a year or two sin; he lies i' th' middle ally near th' chancel. You've bin i' th' Church, may be; it's cleaning day to-day, when they cleans for aw the year and puts fresh rushes down."

"Yes, this is the anniversary of the martyrdom of the blessed Saint Oswald. His fame has spread to many lands, and the scene of his martyrdom by the heathen is only a few miles from here."

"I know nowt about blessed saints or martyrs; we caw it th' rush cart neet."

"Then, how do you keep the festival, my friend?"

"Oh, we've plenty o' ale, an currant chuck, an tripe, an aw sorts o' cakes, an th' vestry's called, an the cess is cessed, and the new rushes fetcht, an folk come fro aw the country side an meeten their friends an relatives next Sunday, that's Wakes Sunday, and they stayen two or three days for the wakes; an ther'll be shows, an races, an bull baiting, an cockfeghting, an aw manner o' things. There'll be the best main o' cocks as ever yo see; sixteen cocks a side against Stoppurt an Cheddle to be fought out as long as there's any cocks left, a Welsh main some folk ca it. I should like to take the shine out o them Cheddle chaps, for they're the swaggeringstest set as ever I see. We'n gotten some rare birds; shanner yo stop an see it?"

"I would rather see the people and their customs. Perhaps you can tell me something about them."

"Well, there's th' parson yonder, Parson Twyford, he's akin to her

as keeps this house; he lives o'er yon, just across the cockpit at th' back o' the inn; then the church is t'other side his garden. Aw these places lie handy like, close together, so as they can aw help one another yo know. Th' parson's son has just wed th' steward's daughter.* Then they can keep th' living in the family. Catch them for not knowing which side their bread's buttered. Mony a man has been hanged for less schaming than they'n done. That's the steward o'er the green, yonder; he's as force as an owd dog fox. Just watch the crafty owd devil going about them booths and shows; he'll get aw as he can; he will have what's reet, an as much more as he can get. Sir John Bland's his lord now, but he's a spreeing chap as never meddles with nothin' so long as he's some money to be goin on wi. There's a deal o' folk comin across the green now, an there'll be a sight more before neet. Yonder's Tom Syddall, him as his feyther's head wur gibbeted on th' cross in Manchester Market Place."

A sudden gleam lit up the pale ascetic face of the stranger, and though he strove to conceal any further emotion, the old horse-leech had noticed him, but continued his tale:—

"There's a namesake of mine with him, young George fletcher, his brother-in-law, and Mester Dawson, a friend of the Broome's, and a young Moss, from Manchester, and two of Dr. Deacon's lads. But I'm gettin dry, and I notice, mester, although yo letten me talk, thou tell'st me nowt thysel. Who may you be?"

"Oh, I'm nothing. Nobody knows me. I like to hear you tell

* July 25, 1745, married by license, the Rev. William Twyford and Miss Molly Broome, both of Didsbury.

about these honest country folk, and if you are getting tired perhaps you'll let me call for some more ale."

"Well, I don't mind if I have another quart, thank ye. I mak no count of a man as cannot take his hafe dozen quarts without stirring from his stool, not that I hold wi teeming it down your throat wi'out swallowing, as some folk do. I always swallows mine fairly; and then at wakes times we reckon to get a good skinfull of home brewed. It makes us happy like—happy down to the tips of our toes, my old aunt used to caw it; and then a bit o' tripe or cowheel an some of their cakes goes down well wi it too. Did yo ever taste any of em? They baken above two thousand manchets agen th' wakes; they are rayther toothsome. Aye, missus, bring us some o' your manchets, only don't bring too many, for I could go on eating them till th' cows come up.* Aye, but good cooking's a great blessing," and the old man shook his head slowly and thoughtfully.

"Bring too many, indeed," growled out a labouring man named Prod, one of the numerous families of Blomeleys. "I'd fain see any un bring too mony for me. If they was welly clemmed on black barley bread aw the year round, they'd ate till they were welly brossen when they'd gotten th' chance. I'll wager I'd eat a cawf at a sittin, and not be stawed then, danged if a would."†

"Some folk are never right, neither full nor fastin; they'd eat as much as would stuff a sofa," said the hostess, as she brought the cakes.

* The cows coming up, or milking time, is the most important part of the day in a dairy district.

† In country places a man is considered to have a very big capacity who can eat a calf at one meal; it has been done sometimes.

"Well, well, let thi meat stop thi mouth, or thou'l be as full as a blown tick."

So Prod smole at the cakes as a donkey smiles at a cabbage.

"Do you find all these good things agree with you, my friend?" said the stranger to old Dick.

"Oh aye, nought much ails me but being a bit short o' cash. Yo see, I dunna believe much in doctors, cos I'm one mysel; leastways I'm a cow doctor, and that's about the same thing. When folk reckons they's ill they sends for the doctor or barber nowadays, and he bleeds em and happen physics em as well wi' some strong drugs, an if that doesn't do they bleeds em again. Just same as I do to the horses and cattle, poor things. I know it's all wrong and nearly allus kills them, but then folk are n'r satisfied unless you does it, and gives em a bottle and charges em well. Besides, they are fond of the blood in winter time when meat's scarce; it makes rare black puddings mixed with meal.* Now, you notice anyone who ne'er fashes theirsels with a doctor, they are allus a deal healthier and more dosome."

"That's true," said another; "and there wouldna be so much o' these rheumatics about if folk wouldna wash so much. Why I anna washed, ceptin my hands and face on a Sunday, not for nigh on sixty years,† and I'm as healthy as any on you."

"No, I don't hold wi too much washin," said old Peter Pass, the

* It was the usual custom to bleed the cattle periodically, not only to cure diseases, but to keep them well, and the blood was used for black puddings. Human beings were also bled by the doctors whenever they got the chance.

† There are men in Didsbury to-day who admit they have not washed all over for sixty years.

blacksmith. "Some folk talken about th' dirt being grued in, but a bit o' goose grease well rubbed in th' skin, specially about th' feet an joints, is a deal better than aw that washin; it makes the skin supple like."

"Well, I don't hold wi rheumatics," said old ffletcher, "but if men getten wet and lie i' their wet clothes, and ne'er take em off from week end to week end, and happen be wet aw that time, what mun they expect? Good plain food and plenty o' work will make anyone healthy that's got reet. A bowl of porridge for breakfast, or a peil full of buttermilk well stodged wi potatoes, an after that a rasher of fat bacon wi a quart o' good ale on th' top, that'll beat any o' you new-fangled foreign drinks for beginning th' day's work on.* Look at the childer they rear nowadays on tea and slop; there's some o'er yon, their mother reckons hers a lady and drinks tea aw day, an best tea cosses a pound a pound, an aw slop when done; there's no guts in it. Where are th' childer's boanes or teeth? They'n gotten none worth having; an they wanten glasses to see wi, an they go bald in no time; they're hafe rotten."†

* A good old-fashioned breakfast was fat bacon and new milk, that is, milk with the cream on it. The author has had it for over thirty years, during which time he has never had a doctor. The reader is welcome to the recipe.

† An uncle and aunt of mine, when aged about seventy-five, were cracking nuts with their teeth; their children could with difficulty do the same, and their grandchildren were no better. If the teeth of every generation deteriorate, the great-grandchildren who are now babies will soon be without teeth. The deterioration has probably been caused by the increased consumption of tea, for the well-to-do generally lived as follows:—

Instead of our slops,
They had cutlets and chops,
And sack possets, and ale in stoups, tankards, and pots,
And they wound up the meal with rump steaks and schalots.

Cheese and ale, with cucumber and raw onions, the above old couple, now in their eightieth year, were lately having for supper.

"Ou's a mezzled face scrannel, an her childer welly clemmed, though her reckons hers a lady," growled another native. "Her feyther may ha been a gentleman, happen he was, but theyse like bargains—it ta'es two to ma em. Now oursens are little throggles, as wick as scopprells, fatter till those uns though theyse fed on nobbut buttermilk an taters, an thinks well o' gettin a bit o' bacon or maybe a fish on a Sunday."

"Why there was a man deed here not many weeks sin," said old Peter, "and the crowner sat on him at this very inn, an th' crowner had him cut open to see what he deed on, an he were chock full o' black coffee suds right up to th' throoat. He'd usened to drink a deal o' coffee, same as some folk do nowadays, an th' coffee suds had stuck in him, an filled him up, an he deed ; he did for sure, for I seed it mysel."

"An sarve him reet, too, why couldna him stick to ale. I've no patience wi them foreign devils an their new ways, they wanten to know more than it's fittin anyone should know. What sayst thu, mon, thou oughtst to know a thing or two, for thou'rt out i' aw weathers, an up aw neet too at times."

The latter part of this speech was addressed to two more of the natives who now entered, one of them having been already introduced to us under the euphonious name of Tippetymew. He was clad in a red and white waistcoat made from the skin of a calf, with the hairy side out and the skinny side in, and with haybands wrapped round his legs, skin or leather breeches, and an otter skin for cap. He was accompanied by a bristle-haired terrier that was very like its master in the face, though it had a stumpy tail. The other man, Jimmy

Hardy, *alias* Blue Jimmy, was a gatherer and retailer of water-cress, wild hops, chamomile, pennyroyal, dandelion, tansy, rue, and various herbs with more or less mysterious uses; he was also a fisherman, with "an ancient and a fish-like smell;" his walking stick was a piece of a bull, and his dress was mainly composed of the skins of animals, which are an excellent protection against wet or cold weather, and very serviceable to primitive man.*

"Aye, th' times is very bad," said old Tippetymew; "what wi enclosing pieces o' the moor an fillin up ditches there'll be no wild beasses soon; an then th' churchwardens dunna want to pay as much for what is cotcht, so ween less to cotch and less for cotchin em. I never seed the like, never."

"Do the heretics that now rule your church use money from the house of God for the destruction of his creatures?" asked our friend the stranger.

"By th' mass, your reverence, dunna get vexed. Poor folk have to be o' what religion they're orthert, an do as they're tol. We an to catch moudywarpes, an rotten, an urchen, an stots, an them stinkin fomarts,† an otters, or onythin else. God ne'er made them things as creeps about on four legs. Th' devil made them an witches an such like, an we allus kills everythin as we can."

• The dog had risen with pricked ears and head on one side at the sound of rotten and urchen, and, after sniffing at some of the company,

*There are at the present time females who come to Didsbury church partly clothed in the skins of wild beasts, sometimes with a row of tails hanging round them as worn by a medicine man of the Indians, and with the skins or mangled limbs of dead birds on their heads.

†Moles, rats, hedgehogs, stoats, polecats, &c.

he gave signs of being a freemason, scratched once or twice with his hind feet in a backward direction, and then went under the bench to try if there was a soft place in the floor before he lay down with one eye open and the other eye shut.

"Do these men still cling to the old faith, the faith of their fore-fathers?" the stranger quietly asked old Dicky; "or what is their faith?"

"It's mostly Church and guts, same as the rest on us. Church and State, or Church and King, it's aw one."

"But which king?" said the stranger.

"Which king? why, how many are there? If they fillen their bellies it's aw one."

"But are they Tories?"

"In course they're Tories. Church and King, or Church and guts, or Tories, it's aw one. But I'm gettin dry, as dry as a kecks, and Tories shouldna be dry; it's worse thing I have agen em is their fastins. I canna hold wi living on fish an cabbage on Fridays, or hasty pudding* on Ash Wednesdays or fast days; but they dunna do it now as much as they did. A deal o' folk nowadays as calls theirsels Tories is only milk and water devils. But who may yo be? Art thou that preachin chap they ca' Wesley,† that's goin about preachin an upsettin things?"

* Hasty pudding was made of flour and milk only; it caused Ash Wednesday to be indeed a day of fasting and sorrow in the author's childhood.

† The parents of Wesley, who had lately begun his preachings, were strong Jacobites; he himself gradually 'verted to the other side from his opposition to Popery. The Catholics and High Church party generally supported the Stewarts, or in other words were Jacobites or Tories.

"No, my friend; I have not even heard of him. Who is he? a setter forth of some strange doctrine?"

"I dunna know. Doctrine troubles me no more than doctorin. There's so many sorts o' religions nowadays, honest folk have a job to know which is reet. Priests used to be reckoned very much count of, but th' sight o' one now has summut th' same effect on me as th' sight of a tom-cat has on a tARRIER dog. I mean no offence, mester, though you looken a bit that way yoursen. But talkin's rayther moythersome, an one's wizzen gets dry. We shall aw wanten another quart apiece when th' rush cart comes and the sound of the music gets nigher and nigher."

The medley of sounds outside the inn had gradually become deeper and louder, and now broke into a hoarse roar of "Here she comes;" "Th' rush cart's in seet;" "Th' rush cart's here;" "Look out," &c., &c. When the rush cart was sighted from the green, the signal was given. The new bells in the church tower clashed their loudest and merriest peal. The din was deafening. The roar of hundreds of voices, the band, and the bells all seemed to outvie with one another. The rush cart, or wagon piled with rushes and ornamented with garlands, was drawn by the best horses that could be obtained; the horses themselves and the escort of dancers and musicianers being covered with ribbons, streamers, flowers, flags, &c. The last part of the journey was done at a gallop by the horses and dancers, and the rush cart pulled up at the church gates. Here all the people danced round it in a storm of sounds loud enough to make "the rude forefathers of the hamlet" turn in their narrow graves.

We may read in the Scriptures that David and the singers of Israel escorted the Ark of the Lord with music and dancing, and if there had been any description of that music and dancing it might have been found similar to that practised at Didisburye. The latter was certainly primitive; it mainly consisted of the dancer, with long ribbons in his hands, taking a step forward, a step backward, and one forward again, as he waved his streamers, this was to the tune of rum-ti-um. The next movement was a complete turn round, with the streamers waved over the head, ti-riddy-iddy-um. Then several quicksteps forward, with another complete turn, ti-rum-tummy-tum-tummy-tum-tum-tum. *Da capo.* This was practised by the village children for weeks. The rush cart day, August 5th, was the happiest day of the year for many poor folk; it was the one great feast or carnival. They grew up from childhood knowing only the rush cart tune and the rush cart dance. One generation passed them on to the next, and associated them with happy memories of the days when they were young and their mothers fondly watched over their childhood's steps; or when in the bloom of their youth their limbs were supple and they gloried in their strength. As age crept on and activity lessened, the regrets for the days that were past would increase, and many a time an old man or woman whose heart was made merry would suddenly break out into the rush cart dance and sing the rush cart tune.

The last few sentences merely describe what I have seen, and, though they are now written in reference to one hundred and forty-six years ago, they will also apply to a still earlier time, for tradition says that the village festival had even then been held for more than five

hundred years. Very few, indeed, are the people in Didsbury to-day who ever heard of St. Oswald. There are many who never heard of the rush cart or the wakes, and yet the festival lived for more than six centuries, and only in our own time has become extinct.

Let not ambition mock their homely joys,
Their useful toil, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The crowd was soon busy carrying the rushes into the Church. Everyone helped, young and old, lads and lasses, all carried some rushes, it was a religious and a happy duty. The Church was newly swept and garnished, the old rushes having been taken away for a bonfire, and the new rushes were now spread in the pews and the new garlands hung over the altar, and the whole place thoroughly cleansed. The old records specify that cleaning the Church meant cleaning "every pew in it," the pews being of divers shapes and sizes. As the twilight deepened the ghostly owls came gliding softly to and fro, and the falling dew increased the scent of the rushes in the sweet evening air. The summer sun set over the green meadows below the churchyard, and the coloured light of the sky was reflected from the broad ditches and the bends of the river as the sounds of merriment and revelry contributed to the solemn peacefulness of a happy village festival. Our friend the stranger lingered long, much interested in all he saw, but as darkness deepened he went back to the inn and boldly asked to be shown into the room where the Manchester men were met. After many diplomatic evasions and much prevarication as to there being such a room or meeting, admittance was at last obtained, and in a low

dark panelled room, crossed with heavy rough oaken beams and with a plain oaken table in the centre, on which stood a large bowl of water, was a goodly assemblage of men among whom the quick eyes of the stranger recognised those pointed out to him by old Fletcher as coming from Manchester.

After carefully shutting the door, and taking care that he did not knock his head against the beams, which were less than two yards from the floor, he introduced himself as follows: "I am sent unto you with tidings of great joy. The name of your village is known in Paris, and in Rome, and wherever the friends of King James the Third meet together. As I am a member of a family that has for centuries owned lands in this parish, I have many friends in the neighbourhood, and I trust and believe I am now in the midst of friends. My name before I was received into religion was Alexander Barlowe, and as an humble emissary of the Church it has been deputed to me to seek you out and tell you that your Prince of Wales, Prince Charles Edward, sailed from France in the *Doutelle*, escorted by the *Elizabeth*, on the 13th day of last month, that his most Christian Majesty the King of France is aiding him with ships and money, and, as several weeks have now elapsed without tidings of his capture, it is almost certain that he has safely effected his landing on the coast of Scotland, and has claimed the kingdom for his father. Even now the fiery cross will be speeding through the Highlands, and the clans will be gathering in battle array. Your Prince will march southwards through Manchester, and it behoves you, as good subjects of the King, to give him what aid and help lies in your power. He has the blessing of His Holiness the Vicar of Christ

on earth, and with the blessing of God Almighty the Church and King must prevail over their enemies. No weapon that is forged against Her shall ever prosper, and the King must reign and his enemies be put in subjection under his feet."

The interest of the company had gradually been growing in intensity, and now burst forth with the wildest enthusiasm. "The King!" "The King!" "The King!" echoed and re-echoed till the oaken rafters of the old inn shook again with the storm of cheers that were raised and toasts that were drunk to the King over the water, King James III. Even in that time of revelry of the annual village feast such an outburst of cheering drew the notice of the people, and the door and windows were besieged by eager enquirers. The good folk of Didisburye did not care much which King was on the throne so long as their pots were kept a-boiling and their children's bellies filled, for was it not their primest duty to attend to them. The government was something very far beyond their ken, and they followed their leaders, the gentry, in simple faith. The gentry were nearly all Church and King men, or, in other words, High Church and Tory, and therefore in various degrees were supporters of the Jacobites or adherents of the Stewarts. They usually met for consultation at an inn in Didisburye, and now more drink was ordered, free drink for anyone who would hold his glass over the bowl of water as he drank to the health of the King. The King over the water signified the King of England who was living in France, and who was therefore over the water. If they had openly drunk the health of King James III. the consequences might have been disastrous. It was altogether more prudent not to name

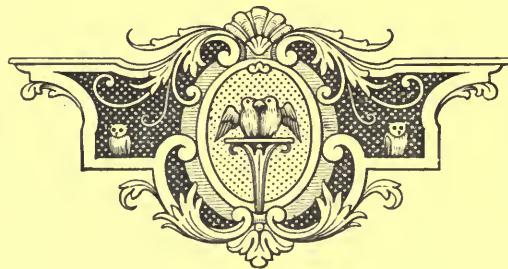
the King or to name the Pretender, for who knew what might happen—

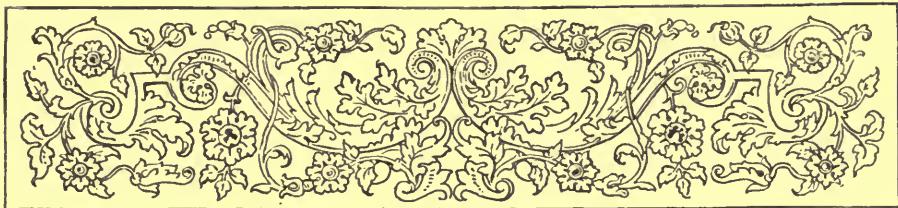
God bless the King! I mean our Faith's Defender;
God bless (no harm in blessing) the Pretender.
But who Pretender is, or who is King,
God bless us all—is quite another thing.

A song in those days was the accompaniment of a feast, and when men had well drunk they would give vent to their feelings. Here is another verse of the period with a double meaning—

The illustrious House of Hanover
And Protestant Succession,
To them I have allegiance sworn,
While they can keep possession.

(*Sotto voce*) And no longer. Chorus, gentlemen, please,
While they can keep possession.





THE WAKES. COCKING AT YE COCK.

In England, where, indeed, they are most potent in potting : your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander—drink ho!—are nothing to your English.—*Iago*.

“**D**UNNA be so lungus, yu come moythering round though ween been as thrunk as dogs i’ dough til we fair sweal; canna yu let us a be,” said a fine upstanding lass of a good brown colour, dressed in a large flowery pattern gown and a poke bonnet, to a besotted maudlin youth in a smock frock with buttons like cheese plates, and a neck-tie of gorgeous hues, like the famous coat of Jacob.

“Coom along o’ me, an I’ll gie thee a fairing,” said the gorby, and when he laughed his face disappeared and only an immense mouth was visible.

“I’d as lief stay a whome. I wudner have yu if every yair o’ your yed wur tagged wi goold. Yu thinken cos yu’n gotten a hundert pound to your fortun yure o’ some account, but yu anner.”

“Ne’er heed th’ cross-grained hussy, there’s as good fish i’ the

watter as there is out ; come an let's see th' bull baiting," said another damsel, and she gave him a slap on the back with a hand like a shoulder of mutton, and off they went arm in arm up to the elbow.

"He's a rum lookin chap, yon is ; they must a bin feart when they got him," was the remark of a bystander. "Ers that fond o' him, er could welly eat him."

"Aye, an er'll wish er had a hetten him, too, afore er's done wi him," grumbled the girl's father. "They caren none so long as their bally's filled. Here I mun scrat, an fend, an pey for aw, and meenteen aw, an aw wunna do. Th' chap gets nobbut a shillin a week an his meat; how can folk keep body an soul together an rear a family on yon.* Wakeses arener what they usent to was when I wur a lad. Why, I've heerd tell that when King Charles wur restored, an them sour-faced Puritans wur shut up, that th' king paid for aw th' drink, an there was gallons an gallons to be had for th' aksing. Yu met a swum in it if it hadner a bin a sin to waste God's gifts by swimmin in it."

"Oh, I'd neer a wasted it, tho I'd leefer a drunk it," said another. "I'd a swum in it first an drunk it arter. I've often heerd tell o' swimmin in drink, an I'd like to try it for wonst afore I dee."

"An then look at th' trouble there is nowadays wi one's wife, if er happens to be okkert. Th' justices wunner let yu fettle em too much yurser if they gi yu too much o' their lip. Whoy, we'd usent to have

* A Didsbury man once told me he got "nobbut a shilling a week an his meat, an he got no meat but on a Sunday." He meant flesh meat on the Sunday. £5 a year (or two shillings a week), with board, was a common wage at farm houses in recent years. My great grandmother had for servants three sisters, who were with her for a many years and who saved "a deal of money." The eldest of them got the highest wages, namely, three guineas a year.

em ducked i' th' watter, or a bridle an gag put i' their mouths when they talkened out o'their turn; but they'n stopt all that, an now they even wanten to stoppen us a hidin of em as well; but I told mine I'd ta her by th' scruff o' the neck an jow er ed agen th' bedpost if er wudner owld er clack."

"Some on em will be allus fratchin, but I'd as leef let em keep emselves to emselves, and not be too hurrysome with em."

"Aye, but some o' them gawming ill-favvert women, they arener fit to be trusted out by theirsels, they arener for sure."

"Well, thee hode thy noise," broke in a large-boned horse-god-mother sort of a woman who had heard the last sentence; "thee hode thy noise, for I owe thee nowt, as the man said to his bally when it rumblert. I may have to carry thee whome to-neet afore thou'st done; may be thou'l be gettin fechtin yet, an we shall see thee runnin like a scawded cock, aw of a dither, and then thou'l be very glad o' thy missus to taken care on thee." Then, as the hen-pecked husband traypsed off, muttering something that was lost in the torrent of his wife's eloquence, she continued: "Aye, them men, it's a good job for em they'n gotten us to look after em. But an yu heard what Betty Piers, th' wise woman at Castle Mill, has brought on young Allcock; aye, but it's woful work. Anner yu heard; ay, well, well. Yu known, young Jerry Allcock wanted Dolly Whitelegg, an her feyther wouldner let her have him; an Betty's a bit akin to the Whiteleggs, an it was thought they'd paid her to frighten them off being wed, for Betty tould young Allcock, says she: 'If thou wed her, thou'l not bed her.' And he said to Dolly, 'Neer heed her, her's nobbut an ould witch,' and he got Dolly off to Stoppurt, and they got wed, and they went to ould John

Lingard's, o' the Ragged Mop an Rollin Pin, an when they was ridin whome, just at Brinksway Bongs, wur th' watter crosses the road, his horse stumblt an pitcht him on his ed, an he knockt his neck out an wur jed afore they could stop him. So he'd wedded her, but he hadner bedded her, just as ould Bet had said. Isner it awfu'?"

"Well, who'd a thot it, but they du some wonderfu things, that's certain, though if haife one hears about em's true, as to turnin into cats, an hares, an such like, the less honest folk has to do wi' em the better."

"Aye, but they do good sometimes. There's ould Bailey, of Gatley, had a son who was laumt wi a bad hip, an he took him to ould Betty, an she passed him through a young ash tree that she'd split up, an she said aw manner o' wonderfu things o'er him, an then er bund up th' ash plant, an as it grew up he grew up, an he got well agen."

"Well, when my Uncle Elijah had his daughters Rachel and Rebecca badly, he took em to John o' th' Hill at Hale Barns, him as makes coffins for far an near, for he's got second sight an can raise th' devil if he likes; an he said they wud ner dee, an they didn't, for they'n living yet; but when old Margery Pownall deed, he told her mester when he was measuring her for her coffin that he'd measure him for hissen at the same time, so as to save him coming again, an th' old chap wur that feart that he took to his bed and deed straight off, an they wur buryt thegither. They do say he makes coffins for folks unbeknownst to them, so as they'll be handy like if they dee in a hurry."

"Then such like folk ought to be burnt alive or ducked in th' watter till they are drownded," said an unbeliever, who had been listening to the women's gossip.

"Oh, husht, man, or by the mass yo dunna know what may happen to you," and most of the women broke into a sweat of clammy terror at the thought of what might happen if the wizards or the wise women heard such profanity and were to revenge themselves by bewitching them.

"I've another bit o' news as has happened since last Wakes time to tell you ; dun you know they'n laid th' Gatley shouter at last, they an for sure. Th' Gatley shouter, you know, was a spectre or boggut that shouted at folk from among the tombs in Northen churchyard, and along th' Carr Lane to Gatley. Mony folk and childer specially were plaguey feart on him, so much so that they daresner go that way after dark, and this new parson at Northen has played the hangment with the ghoses ; he's laid em all over th' countryside, but he couldner lay th' Gatley shouter. However, it's gotten done at last, and I'll tell thee how. There was once a man of the name of Barrow at Cross Acre, an he were very fond o' money, a regular ould skinflint ; he'd have fleyed two fleas for one hide, an he griped an screwed ony road to get hold of ony money, an he stuck to all as he could get. Well, at last he deed, an ould Nick soon got him, an he warmt him, he did rarely, for he mit be heard moaning, 'Milk short o' measure, butter short o' weight, oh, dear, oh, dear ;' then he'd cry out as old Scrat fettled him up a bit. Well, he couldner rest in his grave in Northen churchyard, but mit be heard moaning and crying all th' way to Gatley and back, and folk were plaguey feart ; so th' parson got everyone as could read with their bibles, and them as couldn't read but knew their prayers were to keep on praying as hard as ever they could pray, an one neect at full moon

they spread emselves aw over th' countryside from Northen to Gatley, and they kept drawing nigher in a circle, so as th' shouter couldn't pass them, an at last they'd gotten him in a corner of th' churchyard by the lane side and th' rectory garden, where there's a yew tree, an there they pinned him in ; an th' parson whips out a bit of chalk and draws a holy circle round th' place, and all th' folk join hands and read their bibles out loud as hard as they can read, an t'others gabble desperately at their prayers, an th' parson sings an shouts an hops about an bangs th' book, an th' poor devil moans and groans, an jabbers an chunners, but they fair bet him, an smothert him wi prayer, an th' devil was druv out o' him, an now he let's him abide, an th' Gatley shouter's fairly laid."

Here is another bit of old-fashioned clack :—

“Well, Meary, and how's Tummus?”

“Jed, thank ye.”

“Lor a mercy, when did he dee?”

“Well, if he'd lived till to-morrow he'd a bin jed a fortnit.”

“You dunna say! Well, well, life's uncertain ; we are here to-day and gone yesterday. What did he dee of?”

“He deed of a Toosday. You known he'd supped sorrow wi' a spoon, and at last it pleased the Lord to take him, and now he's gone to a better country. It's very sad, but we mun aw go sometime, for there isn't a man in England will live for ever ; an they say as we'll be happier there, though I'd as lief stop here for mysen.”

“But yu anner said what carriet him off.”

Oh, he'd bin ailing some time ; he wur moonstruck or he'd bin witched ; he wur that lousy he wur welly smothert wi fleck, like them

Irishmen that comes at harvest tide. He'd bin to Stoppurt for a load o' muck some years sin, an he wur market fresh and laid on top o' th' muck i' th' cart fast asleep, an th' horse an cart an him wur out i' th' lone aw neet, an th' moon shone on him and he wur moonstruck. They mostly go lousy when they are like yon, an he wur covert wi em, big uns wi stripes on their backs like rodey bacon, rodey backed uns I caws em; they fair swarmt. An then he wur bothert wi lawyers an constables, an they are wur than fleck. He'd a neighbour, but I'll not mention no names, who'd bin takin a bit of his dole an trespassin on him, an it wur very aggeravatin; so he seed 'torney Broome, an 'torney Broome aksed for a guinea fore he'd do annythin; so he says to Broome, says he, "I anner money to spare, but I'll have the law o' yon ould skinflint as far as a guinea 'll go, but no farther, so yu mun get what yu can off him for th' guinea," and he tells him his tale. Then 'torney Broome tells him that "mony a man had gotten hanged on th' gibbet for less than yon had done, but he'd fettle him;" so he pocketed th' guinea and sent him law, but he neer heard no more about it, an couldna do. Th' lawyers will have holt, an th' parsons are ner much better; they tell us now th' law makes us bury i' woollen shrouds, an guineas an fees are ner so easily gotten nowadays by poor folk, or gentlemen poor folk either for the matter o' that. My old fayther used to say if you sue a beggar you'd catch a louse, an he wur reet. Guineas take a deal o' scrattin for, an it's no use being hurrysome, we'n aw to wait till th' watter comes. we have for sure. It's very hard on lone folk, an things is moythersome. Now, a drop o' mulled ale wi a bit o' nutmeg grated on it would be comfortin like, would ner it?"

"Well, I don't mind if I do, bein as it's wakes time. I'm rayther partial to toast an swig, an happen we may get a bit o' toasted cheese too."

The above interesting conversations, and sundry others of similar type, are supposed to have taken place on the ale bench of the inn or on the village green of Didisburye, where the wakes were in full swing. The lanes, the roadsides, and the adjoining fields were covered with booths, tents, shows, carts tilted up, travelling vans, gipsy encampments, &c. The horse races were held on the Sandlands, the foot races on the High Street, and the prison bars and other similar games down Stenner Lane, in the Withy Ley. The booths and vans contained various curiosities, such as living skeletons, two-headed girls, fat women, hairy dwarfs, &c. A giant, described as being like Goliath of Gath, ten feet high, with a weaver's beam for the shaft of his spear, was in one caravan. If some local Thomas a Didymus, being hard of belief, asked how the giant could stand up when the van was not ten feet high, he would be told to pay his money and walk up, and he would find the giant lying down inside; how could they have the vans made so high they would not go under the trees. Country lads trying which could eat the most treacle dumpling had a rare treat. Ducking in a tub of water for apples with their hands tied behind them was rather washy amusement, with not much substance in it. There was more solidity in having a good drink of buttermilk, and then swallowing a small new potato, and listening for the splash of the potato in the buttermilk. Bull-baiting and bear-baiting were called merry disports, and were very fashionable.

The bull was tethered to a very strongly fastened ring in the green, near where the present lamp is now (it is probable some of the strong

timbers are still in the ground), then dogs were set on it. If a dog could pin the bull by the nose and hold on, he was a good one, but even then he might get tossed in the air, whereupon the spectators would try to catch the dog and save its fall.* The whole sport was rather unfair to the bull, but if he got loose he could soon mend matters.

The bear-baiting is best described in the following account of the manner in which certain English princesses were diverted after hearing mass:—"The princesses were highly diverted with the baiting of bears, tempered with other merry disports. The bears were fastened behind, and worried with great English mastiffs, but not without risque to the dogs. It was a sport very pleasant to see the bear with his pink eyes learing after his enemies, . . . by what shift with biting, with clawing, with roaring, with tossing, with stumbling, he would work and wind himself from them, and, when he was loose, to shake his ears twice or thrice, with the blood and the slaver hanging about his physiognomy." Very nice amusement for young ladies after hearing mass. But we loathe such brutality; let ours be—

The joy that soldiers feel,
When meeting foemen worthy of their steel.

Neither King nor Parliament can make two cocks fight unless the cocks wish to fight; they like it just as Christians and Christian nations are sometimes fond of a bit of fighting, and for hundreds of years cock-fighting was one of the commonest and most popular sports

* It is only a few years since a man died at Northen who had a good dog tossed in this manner and caught, but it died, whereupon he broke out into weeping, and declared he would sooner have lost his wife.

in England. At Didisbury, as an old man expressed it, “there was nowt else; all as some folk cairt for wur cocking.” (He had probably forgotten for the moment the drinking.) “The Cock” was one of the most popular signs for a village inn, and its brazen effigy was generally exalted above the highest pinnacles of the churches.

At the village wakes men might be seen coming from all parts with bags in their hands, each bag holding a cock. Other men were carefully weighing the cocks, and noting down their weights in ounces. The old cockers were most particular as to the artificial spurs and the straps for fastening them securely to the legs of the cocks, the “heeling” being a very important matter, for if the spurs got loose or bent in the fight they could not then be altered, and the cock was at a great disadvantage. Others were in corners, letting the cocks have a preliminary sparring match on loose straw. These cocks had boxing gloves over their spurs and feet, and were dumped down on the straw opposite to one another, and snatched up again before any injury could be done. This improved their science, and developed their wind and agility. Others were feeding their cocks with mysterious compounds, such as horehound and ginger; some had secret mixtures that were supposed to be of inestimable value,—almost good enough to make a dead cock crow. As a rule, the cocks lived far better than their owners, and were surfeited with good food; for in those days to live like a fighting cock was synonymous with everything that was extravagant in good living. To be “as drunk as a lord” was the height of some people’s ambition, while others would prefer to “live like a fighting cock.”

A main of cocks between two counties or parishes caused intense

enthusiasm, and here was Lancashire against Cheshire, or, as the natives expressed it, Didisbury agen Stoppurt an Cheddle. This was the culminating point of the fun of the fair—of the spree of the whole year. Here was all the country side with his wife—a shouting, roaring crowd. Here were Sir John Bland of the Hough, Tattons of Wythenshawe, Blomeleys by the dozen from all over the parish, Chorletons from the old hall, Chorletons from Grundy Hill, ffletchers from the Wood House, ffletchers from the Yeld House, ffletchers from the old fold, Rudds from the Broad Oak, Rudds from the Lum, Langfords from Withington, Garnetts from the Moor-side, Worsleys from the Moss-side, Smiths from the Boat, Hudsons from top o' th bank, Gooldens from the Pars fold, Byrches from the Tythe barn, Byrches from Rushulme, Syddalls from Slate, Barlowes, Booths, Bayleys, Brookes, Bancrofts, Boardmans, and Brundretts. Here were represented the old local families of Hoult, Hough, Henshaw, Heggenbotham, Hesketh, Hampson, Cash, Chetham, Dean, Gresty, Gaskill, Goodyear, Linney, Mosseley, Thorniley, Rogers, Rydings, Worthington, Wrenshawe, Wood, &c. The clerk Woods, as hereditary clerks of the parish, naturally acted as clerks at the cockpit. They kept the accounts and managed the business of the meeting, while the parson took the dignified position of referee.*

The yard of the Cock Inn, especially about the cockpit, was

* There are men living now who have been with parsons to cockfights, and within the last thirty years an old man named Charley Jones, who used to teach boxing, told me that in his youth he had fought a prize fight on Lindow Common, and the parson at Mobberley had been the referee.

crowded with a pushing struggling mob of cockers from all parts. "Men fra Rachdale, fra Yarkshire," even from Cumberland and the Lake country. Staffordshire and Shropshire sent their representatives. All were intent and eager upon the merits of their respective fancies, and all shouted and yelled in the dialect of the district from whence they came. Here were men with faces like foxes, like rats, like owls, like hawks, or like ravens. The very dogs with their masters looked in some cases to be the superior animal of the two. They also went in and out, up and down, making new friends, and talking of auld lang syne in their doggy way. On all sides resounded the war cry, the shrill clarion, of the crowing cocks; for most of them their last hour was at hand, for the main to-day has to be fought out to the bitter end.

In the usual mode of cock fighting each cock fought once, and the event was decided by the majority of wins; but in a Welsh main, or one to be fought outright, the survivors of each side were pitted against one another again and again, until all the cocks of one side were dead or disabled. This latter mode was obviously more bloody and extreme, but it suited the fiercer and more determined spirits among the men. Some cocks would be found that after winning their first battle in good style would lose their pluck, go stiff on their joints, and refuse to fight again. Others would keep game to the death, and fight on as required and as long as there was life in them. All sorts and all colours were allowed, but the weights were restricted to between three pounds six ounces and four pounds eight ounces. The cocks were matched against others of similar weights on the opposite side. If any were of extreme weights they had to be kept in reserve. After many and various

smaller fights and fencings the great main of the day came on for decision. Sixteen cocks a side, to be “foughten out betwixt Stopput an Cheddle agen Didisburye.” At last they get to work, amid breathless excitement. The first cock for Didisburye is a yellow pile called Bonnie Prince Charlie. The piles are the showiest and perhaps the handsomest of game fowls, the cocks having cream-coloured bodies with dark red saddles on the back and golden yellow legs. Bonnie Prince Charlie looked every inch a king, but he was more for show than work, for, after several quick springs at one another, with feints or blows, the rapier-like spur of his adversary pierced his brain, and Bonnie Prince Charlie lay dead. Another and another of the gorgeous piles shared the same fate, and the Didisburye men waxed wroth as they thought the battle was going against them, and they said hard words of their Tory neighbours, who fancied light-coloured cocks, as they sported the white cockade of the Stewarts. Then comes a Stopput cock who won’t fight ; he objects upon principle, and runs round the pit.

“Aye, mester, yon cock wunner feught; screw his neck.”

“Mak him into soup, with a honyon or two, an a bit o’ parsley.”

Amid a chorus of howls and taunts the cock’s neck was screwed and another produced. Gingers, mealys, duns, brassy-blacks, and duckwings oppose one another, but the battle goes sore against Didisburye, and after the first round has been fought out it is found that ten battles have been lost, and there are only six winners left for the next round to oppose the ten on the Cheshire side.

“We mun keep us peckers up,” says an old cocker, whose eyes are like the eyes of hawks, and whosc jaws shut together like the jaws of

a rat trap. "Oursen are aw black reds that are left ; happen we'll win yet. There's time for a quart apiece. We mun keep th' cocks' feet warm, they canner feght wi cold feet ; and dunner let em get stiff, there'll be some skreiking next round, see if there isner."

After a short interval for refreshments, the next round is begun, six cocks on one side (one of them having had an easy win), ten cocks on the other side, four of them having to be kept in reserve. This time the fighting is different ; many of the cocks have not the same agility they had before ; they have gone stiff, some have been wounded, some have lost blood, and some have lost pluck, which is worse. The black red cocks of South Lancashire are always noted for their staying powers ; they are also rather heavier than the birchin, greys, duckwings, or lighter coloured cocks, and weight tells more as the fighting is at closer quarters, and the lighter ones are knocked out. Round the second : first cock for Cheddle funks and squorks, which, being translated from the language of the vernacular, means he is afraid, and shouts out with a peculiar hoarse frightened cry. His opponent makes a dash at him, as he turns to fly, and just strikes him with the spur where his tail joins on to his back. Well-bred cocks, like well-bred men, do not present a certain part of the body to either friend or foe. With two more Cheshire cocks it is all up but shouting, and their opponents, who win so easily, are warmed and flushed with victory, and, therefore, in rare fettle to tackle the reserves.

The end of round the second shows every cock has fought twice, a few of them three times, and there are five left on each side out of the original sixteen on each side.

Now the odds are even again and the excitement increases ; the crowd gets denser round the cockpit ; there is always most thrutching where there's least room. Men swear at one another, call one another condemned beggars, or something similar, use cursory and sanguinary language, and from words very soon get to blows. Fighting is contagious ; it rouses the fierce passions of the men, and makes them



A DESCENDANT OF THE GLADIATORS.

Sketched by the Author from life ; the breed having been in his family for at least a hundred years.

wish to fight as well as their cocks, and fight they do on the smallest provocation. There is just time for another quart a piece, and then the climax to the great struggle, the fighting it out to the death. There are five cocks left in on each side, but how many will stand up for the third, fourth, or fifth time in one day, with bloody spur and beak, face to face with death—if they do, they are game indeed. They are all good cocks now, that have won at least twice, and they will be reserved for breeding

if they survive ; they can run if they like, there's no compulsion, but none do so. Spur wounds and bruises, with stiffening joints and loss of blood, have not cooled their pluck. They are game indeed, but the fighting is slower and more dogged ; there is not the lightning-like thrust of the rapier spur at the adversary's head ; there is not the same quick springing in the air, aiding the spur with all the power of the wing. The clever dodging and quick rallies are slower ; there is more standing and hammering at one another's heads with the beak ; sometimes a bird is clearly thrown on the ground with its adversary on its back. The spur may be plunged in the adversary's body and entangled there. Eyesight is going and heads are swelling, the cocks are getting blind and peck at anything or nothing, but still they fight on, until in some cases they cannot stand or see ; they can only peck at random. The end may not be yet, for the other cocks may be like them, but the scene becomes revolting, and we may take it for granted that they die game and that Didisburye must win, as the lighter Cheshire cocks are being gradually knocked out of time.

Now arises another commotion in the innyard, drawing the attention of the spectators even from the all-absorbing cockpit. Who or what in the name of fortune is this ? Here is a big burly man on horseback, with the corpse of another man thrown across the saddle in front of him.

“ Here's old Isaac Wood I've found drownded in the ford ; will some of you take him ? ” said the rider.

“ Tak him yo sen,” said one.

“ What'st fot im cre for ? ” said another.

"Tak im where you fun him, we dunner wanten him here."

"What'st tu stopping th' cock feght for, mon? We wanten no dead uns here, there's dead uns enoo."

"Take him, or I'll swot him down," roars out the rider.

"We shanner; ta im off wi thee."

"Then here goes, I'll swot him, and if th' crowner wants me he knows where to find me," said the rider, as he "swot" the corpse down, and with a heavy thud it fell on the ground.*

The crowd gathered round the fallen body, making various remarks and conjectures about it, until at last it became evident it must be put somewhere; but there was the difficulty, the inn was full. The law has

* About the time of which I write, my great grandfather, Thomas Moss, of Meece, when riding through a ford, found the body of an old friend of his named Isaac Peter Wood. He got the body over the pommel of his saddle and rode off with it, but no one would take the body from him, and no one, not even Wood's relations, would have anything to do with it. Men were quickly hanged in those days, and often on bare suspicion, so the affair might have become serious. There was also the difficulty of carrying the body of a big man in wet clothes, and he carried it for over three miles. The horse would certainly not like the strange burden. In that predicament he rode into an inn yard, where they also refused to take the corpse; but an inn yard is the proper place for dead bodies found in country districts, and there he said, "If you don't take him, I'll swot him down," and as no one would take him he swot him and left him. The expression of "swot him down" helped the incident to be long remembered in the families of the two men; and as my grandfather, the son of one of them, reared twelve children, nearly all of whom lived to old age, none of them, men or women, being under five feet six in height, and they in their turn reared sixty-five children, the next generation being in hundreds, and a descendant of the other man had twenty-three children with one wife, their respective families became very numerous. The father of the twenty-three children I have seen; he then weighed three hundred and sixty pounds, and the drinking of half a dozen quarts of ale, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, would have been a pleasant evening's entertainment for him. He was once asked to have his weight taken by the owner of a weighing machine at a fair, but the machine could only weigh up to three hundredweight, and that not being sufficient, the machine was in jeopardy, and the owner of it glad to be without such a customer.

always held that unclaimed dead bodies should be taken to the nearest inn to await an inquest, and many a body has been taken to the Cock Inn for that purpose, but it was wakes time, and there was no room in the inn.

“Put it in th’ stable,” says one.

“It’s full, and so’s th’ shippon.”

“Well, then, put it in the pigsty.”

“Oh, by th’ mass, th’ pigs would eat it.”

“Well, we shall aw live till we dee, unless th’ pigs eat us.”

“Rear him up i’ th’ coal hole; he’ll fear th’ boggarts, an th’ rats wunner get him theer.”

“Oh, cover it up any weer; it ’ll have to do till th’ crowner comes and has th’ quest; happen he’ll be coming to the wakes, and then we may have some more wakes on his account.”

Then the women set about covering the body, meanwhile making many and various remarks.

“I hear tell they are going to build another inn on th’ moor where th’ cross roads is, and ca it The Nimrod; it will be nigh to the poor-house and handy like for burying th’ bodies of them as does away wi theirselves, for they have to be buryt at cross roads, and it’s a lonesome cross, that is, where Treacle Lane and th’ moor lane crosses th’ High Street; an we get a sight o’ bodies to bury here as gets washed down from Stopput i’ flood time.”

“There were a man did away with hissel a bit sin, for he’d bin crossed i’ love, and a valentine from his sweetut were found on him, it ran—

Thy head's like a whim whum,
Thy heart's like a drum ;
I've got another sweetheart
An thee mun stay a whum.

After that he felt so lonesome like that he made away with hissel, and there er were singing—

The blacksmith's won my heart
By striking grimly ;
He made the sparks to fly
All up the chimbley.

Well, well, a little mirt's worth a jel o' sorrow. When our Sam got taken, we just told the bees he'd gone hence, and they'd gotten a new master, and we gave em summut to drink, and put crape on the hives, and then got on with us work as usual. It's ill crying o'er spilt milk. There's no use fretting."

The country folk who crowded together in the old parishes at wakes times were bent on having a spree, and neither dead bodies nor anything else could stop them for long. Besides the cockfighting, bull-baiting, and other "merry disports," there was a pig to be run for, which was to be the property of anyone who could catch and hold it by its greasy tail. There was also a leg of mutton on the top of the Maypole, which was greased for the occasion, anyone swarming the pole and reaching the mutton being at liberty to keep it.

These latter were innocent amusements, but the chief fun of the fair was in the ale and the fighting. There is no doubt whatever that our forefathers (whether Saxon or Norman, or whatever we be), who saw little of the world and who had little or no education, and few of the advantages now enjoyed by their descendants, derived their pleasures

mainly from the animal pleasures of love and war, with the addition of a pleasure the "inferior" animals do not share or appreciate—the pleasure of intoxicating drink. If they were merry and sang songs, they must have ale. If they were "coortin" or keeping company, they wanted ale. If the drink begat jealousy or quarrelling, there would be more ale "to make it up again," more quarrelling and wrangling again, and again more ale. Something to make drunk come, not too quickly but to be getting forrader aw neet, until at last the heavy sleep of dead drunk gradually stole over them and in oblivion there was rest.

Give them great meals of beef and beer,
They will eat like wolves and fight like devils.

Many of the men loved fighting for fighting's sake, just as the cocks did; the crowd and the sports made the longing for a fight contagious, and the drink excited them more. Theirs was not the wish for a row such as an Irishman likes, who says, wherever you see a head hit at it; but the wish for a fair stand-up fight with fists, between man and man and fair does. The fights were not often very exhaustive, the chief injuries being received from the ground, and some men being sooner satisfied than others. We have heard of the man's excuse to his wife that it was too early to go home for he hadnor foughten yet. "Then get on wi yer fechtin," said his better half; "some folk talken and talken but they wunner worken." An old man told me "his fayther had once foughten nine fayts i' one day upon Duke's Hillock, at wakes time of coarse; he had brokken a small booan i' his leg at last wi tumblin, but still he threshed his man. Yu see he wur a big little un; he stript well, he wur nobbut five foot eight barfoot, but then he weighed thirteen

stone an wur hard. He didner live long though, for he used hissel so badly ; yu see he were allus faytin, or drinkin, or fishin—he got his livin by fishin. There were some salmon i' th' Mersey i' them days; I mind him gettin one eighteen pound weight at Parker's weir. Well, he used to get wet, an he wur wet for days together, an he neer changed his clothes—happen he'd none to change—an he slept out i' th' ditch backin, so he usened hissel badly as I say, and he didner last long. He wur nobbut seventy-seven when he deed, an I'm a wicker chap at eighty-seven than he wur at seventy-seven, for I've been workin aw neet keepin the fires aleet where they're mendin th' road on th' Moor Lane. It isner every one as earns their living when they're turn't eighty-seven, but then I ne'er goes from home or bothers wi doctors or such like."

When two noted performers like The Magpie and The Crow were going to have a bout, the interest of the neighbours was very great, and the farmers who were sworn in as constables, showed their partiality even more openly than it is shown by their successors, the constables of to-day. Farmer and constable Cookson, being brought to stop a fight, is reported to have exclaimed, "Why, it's our Phil on th' top; lay on him, Phil, hide him well now thou'st gotten him down," &c., &c. If the difference in size between two men was an obstacle to a fair fight, the result would be a war of words at a safe distance from one another, the little one keeping out of the way while the big one shouted at him:—" You wizzen-faced, seven-month cawf, if I get you by th' scuft o' th' neck I'll not leave a whole boan i' th' hide. Thou'l be like a lump of dough that wunner rise; thou are nobbut a young magpie, aw jabber and—"

"Shut up, you big lout; I might a bin as big as you if I'd had as mony faythers," replies the little one, as he dodges off amid the crowd, though for the rest of the day he keeps his eye on the big lout, as he goes powlering round.

Perhaps the reader is tired of the fighting, and would like to hear what the singing is like. Inside the inn the singing is mixed and various, political and sentimental :—

Wha wad na fecht for Charlie,
For Charlie is my darling, the gay Chevalier.

Or—

Ower the water to Charlie,
Come weal, come woe, we'll gather and go,
And live or die wi Charlie.

The political songs of the day, like the toasts, caused more strife, not of words only, but of blows. Here a man would hold his mug of drink aloft, saying, "Here's to the Devil, the Pope, and the Pretender, and may they all rot in——," when his mug would be knocked from his hand and he sent reeling by someone who expressed his preference for going to hell with the Pope and the Pretender, rather than to the other place with Dutch William and German George.

"None of your politics," says one; "let's have a song wi some fun in it."

(Sings) He wore a pig tail, oh see how it cocks.

"Will that do, or 'Gaby Glum'?"

My name is Gaby Glum,
I'm just turned one and twenty;
My face, I think, by gum,
Will get me sweethearts plenty.

“Oh, that’s too slow, and too long; give us one wi some weft in it, with a good rousing chorus.”

“Here goes,” says another—

Cock up your beaver.
Hay, Johnnie, lad, cock up your beaver.

“No, no, let’s have ‘Jolly good ale.’”

Back and belly go bare, go bare,
Let hand and foot grow cold;
In ale we’ll drown our every care,
In jolly good ale and old.

Chorus, lads— Jolly good ale, let’s have it.

Here’s a sentimental one, sung slowly, with a high-pitched quavering voice, by a love-sick damsel—

Mark yonder turtle dove,
He sits on yonder tree;
He sits, and he sings
To his favourite she.

The “tree” and the “she” are long drawn tremulous notes, the former high, the latter low. The effect is rather melancholy, and though some of the weaker vessels like to weep, the wakes is scarcely a time for weeping, and the song does not meet with general approval.

“I’d liefer have old Sally Garner’s song than yon,” says one; “if we mun have a love song, let’s have old Sally”—

When my appronstring was low,
My love followt me through frost and snow;
But when my appronstring was high,
My love look’d in but passèd by.

"Oh, be hanged to your sentiment, let's have a gradely un wi chorus"—

Here's a curse on rich folk all,
Who rob and grind the poor,
And may they get what they desarve
In hell for evermoor.

"Now then art thou goin to be noising theer aw neet thoult sing an sup an sing and sup until thou'rt singing on th' flure an Ise ave to tay thee whome i' a wheelbarrow then thoult be feart o' boggarts an faytin wi thi own shadow or aw of a crill wi a bonny belly wartch i' th morn an I'll have th' childer to tend an bakin to do an washin to do an smoothin to do an nobbut one pair o' ands to do it wi an thoult be assin about aw day sayin thi yed's badly or thi belly wartches an thoult be wantin a drop o' summut hot or some lumber but I'll have thi whome sooner or I'll sweat. Now then get up thi great idle tooad, whatever would happen you men if you hadner us poor women to mind ye and tend ye th' Lord Awmeety only knows. Heh! Men is stoopid."





UNDER WHICH KING?

Under which king, Bezonian? speak, or die.—*Pistol.*



HE autumn of 1745 came and went with nothing of importance to chronicle. Harvests come and go and farmers grumble, just as they always did and always will do. The harvests come and go, but there is no harvest for us, says the man who does not farm. The harvests come and go, but we can make nowt out on em, says the farmer. “If th’ crop’s a good one, we get nowt for it; if it’s a bad one, we have nowt of it.” Still the fruits of the earth were gathered in due season, for the autumn was fine and warm. The Lammas plums, the slobber-chop, toad-back, and brown-beurré pears, the golden pippin, Keswick, and Smith apples, with damsons, Oxnoble and bloody-Roger potatoes, were safely stowed away. The natives went on increasing and multiplying, toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing, then as now. There were no railways, no coaches, no news-

papers, no cabs, no police, no telegraphs, no matches, no drains, no gas. Did anyone want a light for the long winter's night, they must get a rush and use it as a rushlight or candle, after prodigious labour with a flint and steel to strike a spark, or get some mutton fat and a wick and make their own candle. To have "three lights burning while never a plow was going" was a sure sign of extravagance, and thought to be a probable precursor of ruin. The only post-chaise in Manchester was at the Jacobite house, the Swan. News of the outside world came very slowly, for the roads were very bad, and a deal of the country was impassable in winter. The tax-gatherer came; death and taxes are always with us; among the changes and chances of life they are ever present, and there is no escape from them.

Mutterings of the coming storm with wild rumours about Prince Charlie reached Didsburye at times. One week there would be certain information that the Prince was taken prisoner or killed and his followers dispersed. The next week would bring the news that he was everywhere received with the wildest enthusiasm, and it was even whispered with bated breath that George's army had retreated. In a few more days these reports would be contradicted, and conflicting accounts were received more frequently. As time went on there could be no doubt the Prince was advancing with a large body of Highlanders; and English Jacobites were now looking with eagerness to his coming as to the coming of the Messiah. The majority of the English were not surprised at his success in Scotland (among the savages, as some of them termed it), but would he ever dare to enter England and engage all the armies of a strongly seated king and government. If he did,

well and good, they would abide the issue of events. There were politicians on each side, and there were a many neutrals who simply wished to farm their fields and mind their business without bothering with politics. A short summary of the history of the Stewart kings will help many readers to a better understanding of the dispute about the rights of succession to the throne of England.

The Stewarts, or Stuarts, for the name is spelt either way (I have adopted the older fashion as used by Sir Walter Scott), were descended from the Lord High Stewards of Scotland. According to the custom of those days they took for surname the name of Steward or Stewart (as the word steward is pronounced even now by country people). The sixth of the line, Walter, had married Marjory, the daughter of Robert Bruce, the king, and their offspring succeeded to the throne on the extinction of the male line of Bruce. The two first were named Robert, then came those named James. James I. was murdered. James II. was killed by a cannon bursting. James III. was murdered. James IV. fell on Flodden's fatal field. James V. died of a broken heart. His daughter, the celebrated Mary Queen of Scots, as is well known, was beheaded. She, when very young, had married for her second husband her kinsman Henry Stewart Lord Darnley, who was still younger, and she literally blew up her husband and then married the man who did the murder for her. The child of Darnley and Mary succeeded to the throne of Scotland as James VI., and on the death of Elizabeth he succeeded to the English throne as James I.

He was the most fortunate and prosperous of his race, yet he and his parliament were nearly being all blown up together on one celebrated

fifth of November. He earned the title of "the wisest fool in Christendom." His son, Charles I., succeeded him, and was beheaded at Whitehall. His misgovernment and faithlessness had undoubtedly caused what Carlyle termed the armed appeal of Puritanism to the Invisible God of Heaven, and the establishment of the Commonwealth, the most remarkable period in English history. It was then shown to an astonished world that kings did not rule by divine right, and that if their rule was anything but right, their heads might be cut off by due process of law. A salutary lesson for the kings that were to come after.

Charles II. succeeded his father after long years of exile and privation. He endeavoured to make up for lost time, and with his mistresses he laid the foundation of several of our ducal houses. This was the merry monarch, one of the worst of the English kings. His brother, James II., succeeded him, but he took warning by his father's fate, and fled from the country as the increasing opposition to the Catholics led to the revolution of 1688, when William of Orange, the son-in-law of James, was invited to be King of England. The Stewarts were all more or less openly supporters of the Roman Catholic faith. James II. and his son were avowed Catholics, and the opposition to the religion increased the opposition to them. James's daughter, Mary, had married a Protestant, William of Orange, or Dutch William, and when he got the power he showed small mercy to Catholics. They had to pay double taxes upon everything, were not allowed in any public office, and were under all sorts of absurd restrictions, such as they were not allowed to keep a horse worth more than £5, for fear they might be using it for mischief. After them followed Queen Anne, another daughter of

James II., and at her death the Whig Government offered the crown to George, the Elector of Hanover, who was son of a daughter of the daughter of James I., who had married the King of Bohemia, and who was not a Catholic. The best account of the advent of His Most Gracious Majesty King George I. is by Thackeray. He describes the King's elderly favourites, Mesdames Kielmansegge and Schulenburg, created respectively Countess of Darlington and Duchess of Kendal. The duchess was tall and lean of stature, and hence was irreverently nicknamed the Maypole. The Countess was a large-sized, noble woman, and this elevated personage was denominated the Elephant. He then describes the advent of the party as follows :—

“I protest it is a wonderful satirical picture. Here we are, all on our knees. Here is the Archbishop of Canterbury prostrating himself to the head of his Church, with Kielmansegge and Schulenburg with their ruddled cheeks grinning behind the defender of the faith. Here is my Lord Duke of Marlborough, kneeling, too ; the greatest warrior of all times ; he who betrayed King William, betrayed King James, betrayed Queen Anne, betrayed England to the French, the Elector to the Pretender, the Pretender to the Elector. And here are my Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke, &c. . . . Yonder keen old schemer knows the value of their loyalty. Loyalty he must think as applied to me, it is absurd. There are fifty nearer heirs to the throne than I am. You fine Whig gentlemen take me for your own sake, not for mine. You Tories hate me ; you archbishop, smirking on your knees and prating about heaven, you know I don’t care a fig for your Thirty-nine Articles, and can’t understand a word of your stupid

sermons. You, my Lord Duke of Marlborough, you would sell me or anyone else if you found your advantage in it. Come, my good Melusina ; come, my honest Sophia ; let us go into my private room and have some oysters and some Rhine wine, and some pipes afterwards. Let us make the best of our situation ; let us take what we can get, and leave these bawling, brawling, lying English to shout, and fight, and cheat in their own way.”

The German women plundered, the German secretaries plundered, the German cooks and intendants plundered. “Take what you can get,” was the old monarch’s maxim. He took our loyalty for what it was worth, and laid hands on what money he could.

George I. being dead, the Prime Minister rode in haste and knelt down in his jack-boots to George the son as he told him the great news. “Dat is one big lie,” roared out his sacred majesty King George II. He it was who was *de facto* King of England at the date of this story. The king *de jure*, the lineal heir of the king and the rightful sovereign of England, was James III., the son of James II., sometimes called the Old Pretender. The Prince of Wales, sometimes called the Young Pretender, being his son Charles Edward, who made the gallant attempt in 1745 to regain the kingdom for his father.

Thackeray’s description of George II. is not more flattering than was his description of George I. ; he writes of him as “a choleric little sovereign, who shook his fist in his courtiers’ faces, kicked his coat and wig about in his rages, and sometimes kissed the maids of honour. When he was in England, his portrait was placed in the large armchair in the assembly room at Hanover, for the nobility to bow to the arm-

chair and the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, and they spoke under their voices before the august picture. . . . When the poor queen, one of the best of women, was on her deathbed she bade him marry again, and the old king blubbered out, 'Non, non, j'aurai des maitresses.' The grotesque horror of the details surpasses all satire, the dreadful humour of the scene is more terrible than the fiercest irony. When poor Queen Caroline was resting in her coffin, dapper little George, with his red face and his white eyebrows and goggle eyes, at sixty years of age is dressed up like a Turk and dancing with Lady Yarmouth, *alias* Madame Walmoden. This Lady Yarmouth (the most religious and gracious king's favourite) sold a bishopric to a clergyman for £5,000 (that is, she bet him £5,000 that he would be made a bishop, and he lost and paid her). The new-made bishop said the earth was not good enough for the sacred and religious king, the only place was heaven."

In the high society of that day cards were everything, and of course the king must not lose. If he did lose, something must be wrong. How it reminds us of a great trial about baccarat that has lately interested England. Books were not then considered fit articles for drawing-rooms. "Books! Prithee, don't talk to me about books," said old Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough; "the only books I care for are men and cards." The German invasion in high places, as above described by Thackeray, is reproduced even in our own day; at least we are tempted to think so when we read of Princes of Schleswig-Holstein, Teck, Battenberg, Saxe Weimar, &c., holding high positions in the Court and the Army.

German merchants are pushing aside our merchants in Manchester.

German clerks are underselling and overworking our English clerks. They will do more drudgery for less money and live at less expense. German waiters swarm in all the hotels. They will come for no wages and in unlimited quantities. They get better food than sour krout, and they save money out of perquisites. They also learn the language, and then say they can speak English and American. There is an office in London, with branches all over Germany, where hotel proprietors can be supplied with a hundred or more of these little German waiters at almost any time. They are probably the refuse of the German army, seven-months men, who can carry nothing much heavier than a napkin or a tip, but who are good enough to send to England to work for their board and perquisites. The next invasion from the East will probably be of Russian Jews ; then the Celestials may have their turn.

An extraordinary invasion of England that occurred about the time of which I write was that of the common brown rat. Charles Waterton, the great naturalist, of Walton Hall, who died a few years since, and who was an uncompromising and extreme Jacobite even in our day, always maintained that the common rat (or Hanoverian rat, as he termed it) came to England for the first time in the identical ship with George the Elector of Hanover and his mistresses when George came to be crowned King of England. It is certain the common rat was not known in England before that time or thereabouts, and since then it has exterminated the old-fashioned English black rat.

The dissensions of the times caused another remarkable event in our history, that is the first publication of our National Anthem. The original of it was probably an anthem sung in the Catholic Chapel of

James II., the music having been composed by a Dr. Bull, organist to James I., the words being :—

O Deus optimus !
Salvum nunc facito
Regem nostrum ;
Sit læta victoria,
Comes et gloria,
Salvum jam facito,
Tu Dominum.

Exurgat Dominus ;
Rebellis dissipat
Et reprimat ;
Dolos confundito ;
Frances depellito ;
In te sit sita spes ;
O salva nos.

On September 28th, 1745, it was sung at Drury Lane, with harmonies and accompaniments by Dr. Arne, and was made “a loyal song” of two verses only, the words being :—

God save our Lord the King,
Long live our noble King,
God save the King.
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the King.

O Lord our God, arise,
Scatter his enemies,
And make them fall !
Confound their politicks,
Frustate their knavish tricks,
On him our hopes are fixed,
O save us all.

The celebrated verse of Dr. Byrom was probably a parody of it:

God bless the King, I mean the Faith's defender ;
God bless (no harm in blessing) the Pretender ;
But who Pretender is, or who is King,
God bless us all, that's quite another thing.

The news of Prince Charles's sailing from France, as already made known to his adherents in Didsburye, was gradually confirmed with fuller particulars. As he was nearing the shore of Scotland an eagle hovered round the ship—a happy omen to the Prince, who landed at Moidart on July 25th, and set up his standard of red silk with a white centre inscribed “Tandem Triumphans” at Glenfinnan, at the head of

Loch Shiel, on August 19th. Here a monument has since been erected, with inscriptions in English, in Gaelic, and in Latin:

ON THE SPOT WHERE
PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD
FIRST RAISED HIS STANDARD,
ON THE 19TH OF AUGUST, 1745,
WHEN HE MADE THE DARING AND ROMANTIC ATTEMPT
TO RECOVER A THRONE LOST BY THE IMPRUDENCE OF HIS
ANCESTORS,
THIS COLUMN WAS ERECTED BY
ALEXANDER MACDONALD, ESQ., OF GLENALADALE,
TO COMMEMORATE THE GENEROUS ZEAL,
THE UNDAUNTED BRAVERY, AND THE INVIOABLE FIDELITY
OF HIS FOREFATHERS, AND THE REST OF THOSE
WHO FOUGHT AND BLED IN THAT
ARDUOUS AND UNFORTUNATE ENTERPRISE.

The standard was unfurled by the Marquis of Tullibardine in the presence of Cameron of Lochiel with eight hundred of his clan, Macdonald of Keppoch, Mc.Leod, and other lesser chieftains, Glengarry joining soon after with three hundred of his clan. The Government had arrested the Duke of Perth in his own house when at dinner, but under pretence of changing his clothes he gave them the slip, and galloped off on an old pony that was grazing near the castle with only a halter on its head. He also joined the Prince, was his bosom friend, and was made lieutenant-general. John Murray, of Broughton, acted as secretary. Lord George Murray, brother to the Duke of Atholl, and the ancestor of the present duke, was the most capable soldier in the company. They marched for Edinburgh and arrived there on

September 17th; opposition seemed to vanish, and he was everywhere received with enthusiasm. The Prince had hitherto marched on foot with his army, but at Edinburgh he was advised to mount a horse to enter the ancient capital city of his forefathers. Lord Mahon wrote that as the Prince rode through Edinburgh streets in triumph his boots were dimmed with the kisses and tears of the people. The Duke of Perth was on the right hand of his charger, with Lord Elcho on the left hand, as he rode into Holyrood, the palace of his ancestors. Here he held levees, and won the hearts of all, the ladies especially, for he was a handsome man, like most of his race, light-hearted, gay, and romantic. But there was no time to dally, for General Cope was only just outside Edinburgh, and the castle had not been surrendered. On the 19th they came up with General Cope's army at Preston Pans, protected by an almost impassable morass. They lay down all night on the open ground, the Prince sleeping on pea-stalks, and attacked in the early morning. Some one had shown a path over the morass, and in a thick mist the Highlanders attacked with irresistible fury, and almost annihilated the English army. Sir John Cope, attended by very few of his men, fled to Dunbar to announce his own defeat. The ballad-mongers soon made verses on him :—

When Johnnie Cope to Dunbar came,
They speered at him “ Where's a' your men ? ”
“ The deil confound me gin I ken
For I left them a' this morning.”

Some of the Highlanders had never before seen horses in battle ; they expected the horses themselves to fight, so they killed all they could.

One of them having caught a horse after the battle, exchanged it for a pistol. There were many things in the booty they could not understand; chocolate was called Johnny Cope's salve. A Highlander who got a valuable watch soon sold it for a trifle, saying "he was glad to be rid of her, for she lived no time after he caught her." She evidently wanted winding up.

At the inn at Tranent, near the battlefield, the Prince dined with the Duke of Perth and another officer, when the hostess cautiously hid all her pewter and things she fancied valuable, leaving them only a butcher's knife and two common spoons to feed themselves with. The orderly books left in the camp of Cope's army gave instructions for the sure way to demolish the Highlanders, that was to shoot them dead when they were close to, reciting as follows: "— if the fire is given at a distance you probably will be broke, for you never get time to load a second cartridge, and if you give way you may give yourselves for dead, for they being without a firelock or any load, no man with his arms, &c., can escape them, and they give no quarters, but if you will but observe the above directions they are the most despicable enemy that are." That is, they are despicable, if you wait until they are close to you, and then shoot them dead.

The Prince and his army returned to Edinburgh; here the ministers of religion were in great perplexity as to which King they were to pray for. The most prudent way, of course, was to name no names, but pray for the King. One man, a Presbyterian, evidently wished to serve both God and Mammon, or, as it might vulgarly be termed, "to hedge a bit." He prayed for King George, and then said: "As to this young person

who has come among us seeking an earthly crown, do Thou in Thy merciful favour give him a heavenly one." The Prince stayed in Edinburgh till the end of October, the French King sent money and arms, and McPherson, of Cluny, with other chiefs joined him. Then they marched southwards for England, on what would have been called in olden times the raid of Derby. On November 19th they reached Carlisle; here, at Rose Castle, Mr. Dacre's wife was being confined as the advanced guard of the Highlanders under Captain Macdonald arrived. An old servant said to the Captain that any tumult would probably cause the deaths of both mother and daughter, for they were in a critical state, and they were just going to christen the child. Macdonald took off his white cockade and bade them christen her with that in her cap, saying it would protect her if any of their stragglers came. This was done, and Rosemary Dacre, afterwards Lady Clerk, religiously treasured the white cockade through a long life.

No sooner had the army entered England than religious differences began to show themselves. The Duke of Perth was a Catholic, and the Protestants thought they were slighted, and demanded that Lord George Murray, the real fighting head of the army, should have more power. The Prince was courteous to all, though he was a strong believer in the divine right and absolute power of kings. Affairs were amicably arranged and the march southwards resumed. At Penrith they halted to fight General Wade, who was then an old man, slow and irresolute. He retreated on account of a heavy snowstorm, and the punsters said he could not wade through the snow. They reached Preston on the 26th. Lord Murray marched part of the army through

Preston without halting, as the superstitions of the Highlanders made them look upon it as an unlucky place, and a bar to their further progress.

About three o'clock on Thursday afternoon, the 28th November, Manchester was taken by a sergeant of the Prince's army with his girl and his drummer. Sergeant Dickson, an officer's servant, had had leave to go on in advance; he caused some commotion in the town, but he kept anyone off with his blunderbuss, and got to the Bull's Head unmolested, and began to enlist recruits. Next day the main army arrived, marching into the square just as the first rector of St. Ann's, the Rev. Joseph Hoole, was being buried. Some of the officers waited quietly and bareheaded by the grave side until the ceremony was ended. The Prince arrived about two o'clock; he was dressed in light Scotch plaid, with blue sash and silver lace, a gray wig, blue bonnet with J. R. and a white rose on it. He was taken to Mr. Dickenson's house in Market Stead Lane, since known as The Palace. The Duke of Atholl went to Mr. Marsden's; the Duke of Perth to Mr. Gartside's; the chief officers going to the Bull's Head and the Spread Eagle inns. The head quarters were at the former inn, and here enlisting was going on rapidly with one of the Deacons as secretary, and the Manchester Regiment was being formed. It was under the command of Colonel Townley, a member of a good old Tory and Catholic family in Lancashire, the other officers being Captains Blood, Gad, Sanderson, Dawson, Moss, and Fletcher; Lieutenants, three sons of Dr. Deacon, Beswick, Furnival, Chadwick, Holker, Taylor, Hunter, Betts, Weilding, and Maddox; Adjutant Syddall; and Chaplain Coppock, who

paraded the streets in canonicals, with a drummer, preaching the holy cause.

Colonel Townley was rather addicted to strong language, and the celebrated Dr. Byrom, who was then living in Hanging Ditch, and probably the head of the Jacobite party in Manchester, addressed to him the following lines:—

Soldier, so tender of thy Prince's fame,
Why so profuse of a superior name?
For the King's sake the brunt of battles bear,
But for the King of kings' sake—Do not swear.

Dr. Deacon, the minister of the true British Catholic Church and the head of the Non-jurors, was also a staunch Jacobite. He lived in Fennel Street, and gave his three sons to the cause. Many of the leading merchants were also favourable to the Prince. The Rev. Mr. Clayton, the chaplain, fell on his knees in the street and asked for the Prince's blessing. Sir Oswald Mosley, of Ancoats, had entertained the Prince the year before and was believed to be secretly supporting him, though as an old man he did nothing openly and was away from Manchester at the time. Mr. Waller, the boroughreeve, or chief magistrate, sat behind a silken curtain stretched across the room of audience, for he was not going to compromise himself any more than he could help. The militia were disbanded and sent home just before the Highlanders arrived. "Well contrived," Miss Byrom wrote in her journal. The constables found themselves under new masters, and were rather perplexed, as the following extracts from a constable's diary will show:—

" November 29th, about four o'clock, James III. proclaimed King at the Cross. An officer said to the Constable giving out Billets, 'God dame you, sir, none of your Billets shall pass; we will quarter ourselves.' When I came to the Bull's Head, the Colonel said, 'Dam you, sir, we have been waiting for you; send for the Churchwardens or go yourself, &c.' We were sent for to an officer that commanded the Trane (Artillery train) to the Spread Eagle in the Hanging Ditch, where we went. We had orders to press one hundred and eighty horses with carriages for the Trane. The officer sent the landlord for the High Constable or his Debuty; would not let me go. Threatened to fire his house and put him under military execution, for all his orders must be obeyed. Sunday, December 1st, sent for to the Bull's Head. The Major demanded a horse and man to take him over Barlow ford. I told him I would send the Debuty. 'God dame you, sir, sit down; you shall not go until the horse and man is in the yard.' The Major said he must be one that did know that ford and Chedel ford. An officer said 'Dam it, what's that to us; he shall go over first.'" The head constables of Manchester at that time evidently had not the same self-importance and self-assertiveness they have acquired since they are chosen more for good looks than for sense, or their self-importance and courage had soon evaporated. The majority of the people seem to have been in a state of indecision as to the respective kings, and merely wished to be left alone. It is recorded there was only one post-chaise kept in Manchester then, and London newspapers came three times a week, therefore authentic news filtered through the people very slowly.

On the 30th November, St. Andrew's Day, the Scottish chiefs appear to have had service of their own at the old church. After the service there was a partial review, each officer having a plaid waistcoat and white cockade, with sword and pistols. The newly-formed Manchester Regiment was reviewed in the most suggestive spot that could be found, the old churchyard. The flag was inscribed on one side with the words Liberty and Property, on the other side Church and King.

The magic letters P.C. appeared everywhere, for anyone could use them, as they stood for Pin Cushion, Prince Charles, Protestant Church, etc. Here are some extracts from the journal of Beppy, Dr. Byrom's daughter Elizabeth:—"An officer came to us at Cross (Hyde's Cross) and gave us the manifesto. Every house was illuminated. I dressed me up in my white (Jacobite colour) gown; went to Mr. Fletcher's; saw the P. get on horseback; a noble sight it was, I would not have missed it for a deal; his horse had stood an hour in the court without stirring, and as soon as he gat on he began a dancing and capering as if he was proud of his burden, and when he rid out of the court he was received with as much joy and shouting almost as if he had been king without dispute. . . . Prayed for the King and Prince of Wales, but named no names. . . . Went to Mr. Fletcher's; stayed there till the P. was at supper, then the officer introduced us; stayed awhile and went into the great parlour where the officers dining, were nearly fuddled with drinking the P.'s health; kissed his hand; then to Mr. Fletcher's, and went home." She also relates how a Highlander went to visit a relative (probably some friend of the elder Syddall) at Slate Hall, Levenshulme;

it was a risky journey for the man by himself; he kept his drawn sword in his hand.

The same night Mr. Gartside, who owned the Spread Eagle, in the Ditch, and at whose private house the Duke of Perth was lodging, gave a supper, or dinner as it now would be called, to a many of the officers of the Prince's army. The head quarters of the artillery and cavalry were at this inn, where many of the officers were staying, and this supper, with its attendant revelry, would probably be the most remarkable gathering in the inn's long history.

Night sank at last over Manchester—a long, anxious, sleepless night to many; a more anxious night was probably never passed in Manchester, not even in the wars of the Parliamentarians and Royalists. It must be remembered that an army was quartered in the town, an army of six or seven thousand men, composed of widely different races and creeds, some of whom were simply savages from the mountains, only partially clothed, speaking a foreign language, and owning no law but the will of their chiefs. They were utter strangers even to the civilisation of those days; it was said they were cannibals, and the usual false and malicious reports circulated about others were circulated about them, readily receiving credence, because the men talked "gibberish," and generally had neither caps nor trousers, nor boots, nor money.

Cameron, of Lochiel, was surprised by a woman falling on her knees to him and clasping his legs as he entered her house, begging of him to spare her children. She had been told the children would be killed and eaten, so she had hidden them in the cupboard, and then took the double precaution of begging for mercy as the Highland chief

entered the house. The hatred and horror the extreme fanatics on either side had for one another was very great, and no rumour was too horrible for belief with them. The High Church and the Low Church, the Tory and the Whig, were much further apart than they are now. Any accidental quarrel might have kindled a terrible conflagration. The Church and King men, of course, took the side of the Prince, for any believer in the divine right of kings must acknowledge the Stewarts to have been the rightful kings, and, therefore, the Georges (aided by the Whigs) were usurpers. The Church had an elastic meaning. It might mean the Church of Rome, the Catholic Church, or the Church of England. (It being a weak point if the head of the Church of England, *i.e.*, the King, could obtain his position by force or fraud.) Generally the Church and King men were Roman Catholics, or what are even now called High Churchmen, and the success of the Stewarts or Jacobites was considered to be the success and return to power of the High Church party, if not of the Roman Catholics.

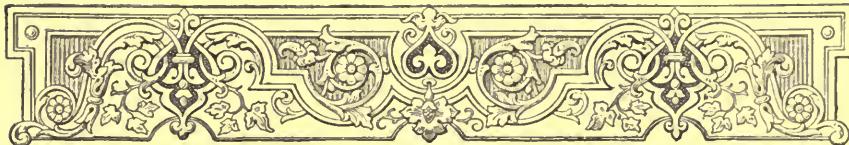
This was the weak point of the cause, for thousands who would admit James III. to be the rightful King of England, dreaded the return to power of the priests. Experience has proved that government by or through priests is the worst form of government known, excepting perhaps the government by young women, and the practical sense of the English seemed to consider the foreign king as a lesser evil than the influence of the priests and women.

Providentially all passed off quietly; the wild Highlanders were infinitely better behaved than they were reputed to be, though some of the virtues most in esteem with them would have been called vices by

the more civilised part of the community, for they would have dirked a man with no more thought or remorse than they would have dirked a calf, if their chief had bidden them do so. A Highlander, who was insulted or wronged, would have stood on little ceremony with his opponent, who would probably have soon felt under his fifth rib the swift thrust of the skene dhu.



OLD MONUMENT IN DIDISBURYE CHURCH TO SIR NICHOLAS MOSSELEV, KNT.,
LORD MAYOR OF LONDON, AND HIS WYFFES AND CHILDREN.



DIDISBURYE'S GLIMPSE OF WAR.



They sell the pasture now to buy the horse.—*Henry V.*

UNDAY, 1st December, 1745. The most memorable day in the annals of Didisburye since the sad time, one hundred and forty years before, when, sweltering under an autumnal sun, the pestilence was stalking through the land, and the villagers were being heaped together in one common grave.

The parish registers of September, 1605, give the burials at Diddesburye, “ex pestilentia.” About a dozen of the clan of the Blomeleys, a still born infante, whose mother was infected, and some others were buried within a few days. The quaint writing and the fast fading ink on the well-worn sheepskin are now almost illegible. *Ex pestilentia, eodem die, eodem morbe, eodem sepulchre* [From the pestilence, the same day, the same disease, the same grave], is the short and simple record of a sad and long-buried past.

Long before the dawn broke on the short winter's day of December

1st, the tramp of armèd men was heard as they marched through Didisburye down the High Street and the Miln gate. Over the village green towards the old mill, and through the marshes, their guides took them to the ford of the Mersey, by Gatley. The unwonted sounds disturbed both man and bird, and beast. The sentinel of the wild geese feeding in the marshes gave the warning kank, the note of alarm, and instantly every long neck was stretched for flight as the gaggle of geese on strong pinions flew towards the sea. The fox whisked his brush as he slunk rapidly and silently away. The timid hares fled across the bogs in all directions, sitting upright with cocked ears meditating on the unusual noise, and frightening one another. The heron slowly flapped his huge wings as he sought a quieter fishing ground; and the loud quack, quack, quack of the startled wild duck gave the alarm to others as on quickly whirring pinions she fled to the river or the distant marshes. The otter silently sank under the water, with only eyes and nostrils exposed, observing all that passed, and diving below without a ripple when he deemed the danger too near. Fifty-five men were guided down to and through the Gatley ford; the water came breast high, the current was strong, and the bottom was stoney. The passage of the river, and the roads to it across the marshes, and up the Watery lane on the Cheshire side, were passable for men with poles or for horses, but hazardous for vehicles, especially for cannon. The men turned to the left, up stream; they may have tried the old boat place at Broad Oak; they went to Cheadle, and returned by the Cheadle boat. Meanwhile two hundred men had gone through Stretford to repair the bridge over the old Roman street

ford; others were trying Barlow ford, and others reconnoitring Stockford (or Stockport as it is now spelt). At the last-named town the bridges were broken down, for the regiment of Liverpool blues had lately been holding the town for King George. Under the circumstances the Prince's army undoubtedly took the best course, and that was to build a bridge over the Mersey between Didisburye and Cheadle, where they were more secure from attack during the passage of the river than they were in the town of Stockport, and where they were also on the best road for London. Altringham and Northwich are out of the direct route, and the way from Stockport to Buxton or Macclesfield is over a hilly country that might have become impassable any day, as the time was winter, and there were then no roads in the modern meaning of the term. The route from Manchester I think would be by London Road towards Longsight, turning to the right at Rushford, with Rushhulme on the right hand (there was no Oxford Road then), and along Slade Lane and Burnage Lane to Boulton Wood and Didisburye. This also would certainly be the best route in every sense: it was past Slate Hall, the Syddalls' place, and by parts of Heaton and Heaton Wood (then owned by the fletchers), and a district where the friends of the Prince were known to be influential. Some little evidence showing this to have been the route is also produced by the well-known entry in the church registers, December 10th, 1745: "A poor man buried at Dids; found dead at Heaton wⁿ ye rebels past." Burnage Lane being the boundary of Heaton for about two miles, anyone found dead in the lane or to the left of the line of march would have been found in Heaton.

The Prince's army having reached Didsburye, again did the best thing they could do in building a bridge over the narrow part of the river at Cheadle boat. Until then, there had been no bridge over the Mersey between Stockport and Stretford, and there was none on any other site for over a hundred years, although this, the Highlanders' bridge, was rebuilt four times. The first bridge fell in 1756; the second, a wooden one, was washed away about the end of the last century; the third, a stone one, was taken down in 1860; and the fourth is still standing. The site for this bridge and for the old ferry boat was probably chosen as the extent of low-lying land on both sides of it is less than at any other place. The dangers and difficulties of getting cannon and baggage waggons down the swampy lane to Gatley ford and up the Watery lane would be almost as great as and of longer continuance than the crossing of the ford itself, and the depth of water in the Mersey fluctuates so rapidly that a sudden storm might have made the river totally impassable, or even have swept away anything that was crossing as the spate came down.

Orders were finally given for the bridge to be built, and the work was rapidly done. The farmers' men with their horses and carts were requisitioned from all round the country, and they were compelled to work in a manner very different to their usual slow and plodding toil. The tall poplar trees that grew so large and so thickly in the swampy ground were felled or dragged across the river, and on them were laid other trees with boughs and planks across, the interstices being filled with sods and clay, &c. A strong serviceable bridge would soon be made when the big poplars were got into position on the opposite banks.

Various are the traditions concerning the building of this bridge that have survived among the old families in the district, the most important fact to them being that in many cases the horses were never seen again; in still more numerous cases men had their boots begged, borrowed, or stolen, for the petticoat men had come barefoot from the Highlands, and were getting footsore. The shoes of the lowland Scotch were being worn out, and yet they did not like shoon made from treen as they described the wooden clogs of Lancashire. On the whole the plunder was very little, and in some cases valuables were left behind, for, years afterwards, a bag of money was found buried near this bridge that was supposed to have been hidden temporarily by someone who was engaged in its construction. Not many years since a bayonet belonging to this time was found in the case of an old-fashioned cottage clock, and the short sword of a Highlander was long preserved at a farmhouse. I lately tried to get this sword, but all my informant could learn was that it had been used for chopping turnips, and was now lost. Chopping turnips instead of the heads of heretics, "to what vile uses do we come?" The owner of this sword had been shot from behind a hedge in Ringway. He was probably one of the two hundred who had gone towards Altringham, by Stretford, then turning to the left for Wilmslow, and was murdered by someone who flayed him and kept his skin, in a similar spirit to that of the Duke of Cumberland, who regarded a Highlander as a wolf.

Dim memories and legends of the building of the bridge, and the passage of the Highlanders, have been handed down from sire to son in many an old farmhouse in the district. Of all occupations farming is

the one that changes least, and where men are born and bred on the same spot for generations, and till the same fields that their fathers tilled, their hereditary occupation and their training causes them to notice, and have in remembrance, what their fathers have told them as to anything remarkable in the seasons that are past—the floods, the frost, or the drought, and their effect upon the crops, or any eventful deed that has been done in the district.

But let not everyone imagine that he can soon get to know from a farmer all that the farmer knows, or some little bird may chance to hear a dialogue something like the following :—

“Oh, Mr. Chawbacon, I hear your great grandfather was on this farm when the rebels came; can you tell me anything of the old times?”

Mr. Chawbacon thinks to himself: “Here’s another o’ them Manchester cotton devils coming to moyther me and teach me farmin an get what he can out o’ me. Noa, I dunna know much; times was a vast deal betteren than they are now for farmers. Why, my grandfayther sold his wheat at a ginny a bushel, an we canna get moren a ginny a looud now, an ten strike to th’ acre beside. Them was times, them wos.”

“But about the rebels and the Highlanders, what do you know of them?”

“I know nowt about em ‘ceptin we lost th’ horses; whether they was rebels or King’s men, we lost, that’s aw as I knows. I ne’er bothers my head about rebels; it tayes one aw one’s time to scrattle th’ rent together.”

“It seems to me you farmers are not energetic enough, if you’ll excuse me saying so. You want more stock, and more poultry, and

better butter. Now a knowledge of chemistry would teach you what manures to use. Geology, also, is neglected, and entomology and botany; very few farmers can tell even the names of all the insects and grasses on their farms. And bookkeeping; do you keep books at all?"

"Oh, aye; ween a big family bible, with pictures, and a Pilgrim's Progress, and Harvey's Meditations in the Tombs. Th' women folk reads em on Sunday nights, but I goes to sleep. Ween no time to read gradely, things is too bad."

"But you should exert yourself, my good friend."

"Xert be damned; you fine town folk would talk a toad to death wi your jaw-breaking words and your book larnin, and yet you couldner grope a hen nor skin a rabbit, nor tell grass from seeds nor stirk from steers. If my head could ache you'd make it; but I wunner jow my breens wi such. You towns folk are as ignorant as dirt," and, unconsciously quoting Shakespeare as Shakespeare probably quoted some farmer of his day, the old man hobbles off with a rheumatic hip as he gazes towards the far fields where he goes to "look the things."

The citizen thanks God he is not like the old fossil of a farmer, and looks forward to the time when, having made enough money (an uncertain and receding time), he can buy land of his own and show the poor farmers how to farm. The dialogue is ended, however, though the desired information has not been obtained, and it is probable the farmer goes to his home, after his meditations in the fields at eventide, to a sound sleep and healthy rest, justified rather than the other.

Thirty or forty years since any old native of Didsbury, speaking of the open space in front of the inns where the large gas lamp and the cab stand now are, would have called it the Duke's Hillock. If asked where the Duke's Hillock was, he would have replied on the High Street, or the high road, where the last bit of the green was, near to the alehouses. If a youth of inquiring mind had asked for more particulars as to who was the Duke and what had become of the hillock, all he could learn was that the old native could not just bethink him of the name of the Duke, though he had heard it, and as to the hillock it must have been "wore down." Hillock, of course, means a little hill or mound of earth. When I first heard the tale I always associated it with the hill in the Stenner; but that was only irritating to the old men, who said one was Stenner Broo, the other was Duke's Hillock on the green. So the old name was fast dying out, as the old natives died out and others arose who were strangers in the land; they altered the names, and cared nothing for history or old associations. It is difficult to know why they altered them, for the old names were as cheap as the new ones. Parts of the green were enclosed, and the footpaths were stopped, for the land was becoming more valuable, and recreation grounds would add to the rates; but respect for old names is an innocent amusement that costs nothing, and is disregarded only by the very ignorant. No history that I could find mentions the Duke's Hillock, though Didsbury is mentioned in connection with the '45. There were several dukes in both armies who may have been at Didsbury about that time. On the whole I think it most probable that the legend relates to the Duke of Perth, who, as a general in the Prince's

army, would most probably halt at Didsbury while the bridge was being completed. And tradition, again, says that officers of the army addressed the people both here and at Cheadle. The day being Sunday, some of these addresses were from the pulpits of the churches; and as the greater part of the army had to wait some hours for the bridge to be completed, it is almost certain they would wait or halt on the large open space of the green, which was then twenty times larger than it is now (extending over the shooting butts field and the bowling green), and there their commander's standard would be raised on some hillock, and the general, perhaps the Duke of Perth, addressed the army and the people.

It was towards three o'clock before the bridge was ready for the passage of the artillery and baggage waggons. The route from Didisburye green to the Cheadle boat, where the bridge was made, would be by the path that went in a south-easterly direction from the church to the ferry boat, and by Dark Lane, that is the old lane that went from Milngate to the road near to the bridge (this lane has been stolen from the public by the landowners, and so far I have not been able to get anyone to help me to prevent the theft). The cavalry crossed the river by the fords, for Miss Byrom mentions Lord Elcho's division as passing Baguley Old Hall, so he probably crossed by Northen ford or Barlow ford. There were other troops under Lord Balmerino, Lord Kilmarnock, and Lord Pitsligo. The Prince himself crossed on foot higher up the river nearer to Stockport, wading through the water, which reached to his middle, he being a tall man. Awaiting his crossing of the Mersey were some of the Cheshire gentry, and here took place the following

incident as given by Lord Mahon in his history, his informant being Lord Keith:—"Amongst those welcoming the Prince was Mrs. Skyring, a lady in extreme old age. As a child she had been lifted up in her mother's arms to view the happy landing, at Dover, of Charles the Second (1660). Her father, an old cavalier, had afterwards to undergo, not merely neglect, but oppression, from that thankless monarch; still, however, he and his wife continued devoted to the Royal cause, and their daughter grew up as devoted as they. After the expulsion of the Stuarts, all her thoughts, her hopes, her prayers, were directed to another Restoration. Ever afterwards she had with rigid punctuality laid aside one-half of her yearly income to remit for the exiled family abroad, concealing only the name of the giver, which she said was of no importance to them, and might give them pain if they remembered the unkind treatment she had formerly received. She had now parted with her jewels, her plate, and every little article of value she possessed; the price of which, in a purse, she laid at the feet of Prince Charles, while, straining her dim eyes to gaze on his features, and pressing his hand to her shrivelled lips, she exclaimed, with affectionate rapture, in the words of Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!' It is added that she did not survive the shock, when, a few days afterwards, she was told of the retreat. Such was the old spirit of loyalty in England. Such were the characters which history is proud to record, and fiction loves to imitate." Lord Mahon quotes some more instances of self-devotion to the Stewarts by English men and women, and adds: "But in that year the most common feeling throughout England was indifference. As Charles advanced from Manchester he

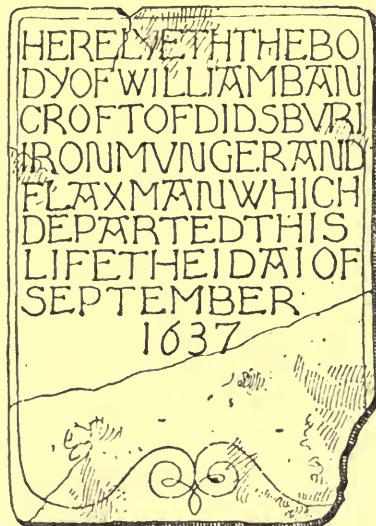
found the people very little inclined to assist him, and displaying no fellow feeling with the 'wild petticoat men,' as they called the Highlanders. On the other hand, they showed an equal unconcern to the interests of the reigning family, and looked coolly on the struggle as they might upon a game, forgetting that they themselves formed the stakes of the players." He admits that a Protestant government was preferable, and yet laments—"How greatly have we now improved upon those unphilosophical times! How far more judicious to value kings and governments, like other articles, only according to their cheapness or convenience! How much safer always to acknowledge the reigning sovereign as the rightful one!"

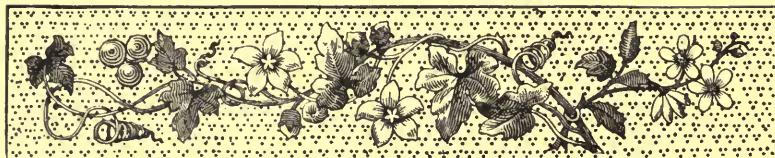
Everyone has heard of Flora Macdonald, yet few have heard of poor old Mrs. Skyring, though her faith and devotion were as strong and sublime as any recorded in history. When we read of such sacrifices in our own land and lineage, in our own parish and 'mid our own people, they are, indeed, brought nearer home to us. Among other instances of devotion may be mentioned the local one of Mrs. Townley, who was aunt to Ormerod, the historian. He saw her "grasping as an amulet or holy thing a crown piece of James the Second which she never loosed, and she died grasping it. The impression was worn from the coin, and a hardened furrow in the palm of her hand was cut deeply into by the nails of the curved fingers."

What a scene there must have been on this eventful Sunday in the old church of Didisburye. Women had flocked for safety with their children to the church as to a place of sanctuary; the regular service was suspended; war's wild alarms were ringing and echoing outside.

Roman Catholic priests with the Prince's army have been accused of prematurely claiming their churches again, and in the midst of the throng there may have reappeared the tall figure of Barlowe, the Jesuit, calling upon officers and men to come to the church and ask a blessing on their work. To the people he would say: "These are good soldiers of the Church who will never harm you, who will help and befriend you, and who merely wish to set the rightful king upon the throne again. I would that all of you were such as they, for it is written, 'Let him that hath no sword sell his garment and buy one.' Heed not the idle clamour of those who seek to frighten you by old wives' fables from the straight path of right and justice. 'Whatsoever thou findest for thy hand to do, do it with thy might.' Emulate the deeds of the blessed warrior and martyr, King Oswald, your patron saint, who fell near here when in warfare against the heathen. You, also, may fall in warfare, if not against the heathen, against a foreign usurper who has unjustly seized upon the sacred office of King of England, and who now calls himself the Anointed of the Lord. If you do fall, you fall as soldiers of the church militant upon earth and as martyrs in the cause of justice. We know that some of the proudest families of England bow the knee to the German usurper. They are apostates from the faith of their fathers—they are traitors, alike to their country and to their God. We are united in striving for the King to have his own again. In that we are agreed, and though my faith is not the faith of the legalised schism of the present day, yet these old walls were consecrated by us. Here your forefathers and my forefathers sleep their last long sleep—here, in this church, which in their life they loved, and where in their death they lie.

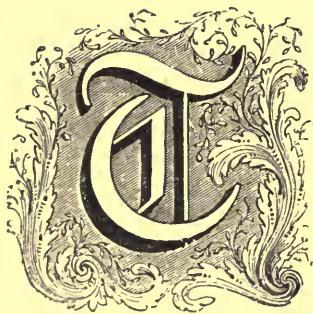
Here they were brought for their baptism; here they knelt in prayer; here they were wed; and here they lie. By these consecrated walls around us and by the sacred dust below us, by all that men hold most holy upon earth, I charge you, Captain Fletcher, and you, men of Didisburye, who are soldiers in his company, I exhort you, I plead with you, that you rest not, slacken not, falter not, until, until 'thou hast the victory won, or won the martyr's crown.'"





THE TURN OF THE TIDE.

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.—*Brutus*.



HE names of two spots in Didsbury convey some reference to the events of the '45, but the traditions respecting them are so vague as to be scarcely worth noting, excepting for the fact that there would undoubtedly be some truth in the origin of the traditions. The places are Scotchcroft and Kingston;

they adjoin one another and the old village green. There was a Duke of Kingston in the army of the Duke of Cumberland, and a part of this army, the regiment of Liverpool Blues, retreated from Stockport after destroying Lancashire Bridge. According to one of my old informants, the Duke of Cumberland marched through Sharston (that is, on the route from Liverpool to Stockport), where he "pressed" (that is, compelled to enlist) a big young man, called Podmore, who was ploughing in a field

at the lane end near Sharston. This man was taken, nearly naked as he was, as was the custom in those days when working; he proved a valuable recruit, for he fought at Culloden, was wounded twice, was shot through the mouth in Flanders and left for dead; went through many wars in many countries, and finally died at Styal, aged 95. He was six feet four inches in height, and there may still be people living who remember him. Another soldier of this regiment lies buried in Cheadle churchyard; but of him I cannot learn anything excepting there is recorded in the parish registers of burials, "December 4th, 1745. W. Livesley, a soldier in the regiment of Liverpool Blues." It is possible this man was killed in some affray on this first of December, for it is evident he was a soldier when he met his death, though history relates nothing more concerning him. The vague tradition respecting Scotchcroft and Kingston, as previously referred to, simply states that the Scotch or Prince's army was at Scotchcroft while the English or Hanoverian army under the Duke of Kingston was at Kingston, but the armies separated without injuring one another. It may have been that the vanguard of the one came up to the rearguard of the other, but if it had been anything of greater importance some of the histories would have recorded the fact. There were some pits called The Famous Pits, behind the old toll bar at Parr's Wood. I never could find the origin of the name "Famous," but I should judge it to have been from something that occurred about this time, as the pits were exactly on the route of the army.

The Manchester Regiment arrived at Wilmslow on the night of the first of December, and at Congleton the night after. One division of the

army went through Macclesfield; here Ray, who wrote "a compleat history of the Rebellion" (having a deal to say about those lousy rebels, who he described as being like the ancient Goths, bold and daring, and inured to hardships), had to retreat from the Angel Inn in a hurry, leaving his "instruments of death, pistols, stock-lock and barrel of polished steel inlaid with silver, and Andrew Ferrara sword," behind him. The landlord of the inn was taken prisoner as a boy was stabbed in the tumult. The Duke of Cumberland had barely time to retreat from Congleton with his ten thousand men. At the Red Lion, Talk-o'-th'-Hill, that is part way between Congleton and Newcastle, Lord Elcho took prisoner Captain Vere, or Weir, of the rearguard of the Duke's army, who was suspected of being a spy, and who narrowly escaped hanging. The Duke of Cumberland now retreated to Stone Town-field, leaving most of his baggage at Newcastle, while Lord George Murray, turning more to the left, by a forced march, got to Ashbourne, where he joined with the other division of the Prince's army that had gone through Macclesfield, and together they marched for Derby, where they arrived the next day, December the fifth.

By these skilful marches and manœuvres the Prince had now got past both the Hanoverian armies, and was within one hundred and twenty-seven miles of London; his outposts were at Swarkston Bridge, six miles further on the road. The way to the capital was open, powerful friends were there expecting him, and everything seemed as favourable as it was possible to be. The Prince was considering whether he should enter London on horseback or on foot, whether he should wear the English or the Highland dress, and in the midst of his joyful

anticipations the doom of his race seemed to overshadow him. So far it had seemed as if "Heaven herself had made all opposition to fall before him," but here at Derby his bosom friend the Duke of Perth read in the *St. James's Evening Post* that the French troops were countermanded and that a strong English fleet was guarding the Channel, and also that his brother, Lord Drummond, a general in the French army, had landed with reinforcements at Montrose. A council of war was held, and against the wishes of the Prince it was decided to retreat. Lord George Murray, the real head of the army, had been dissatisfied with the help they had received in England, and he thought it madness to advance still further with only six or seven thousand men and five hundred cavalry, with Wade's army in the rear and the Duke of Cumberland's on the right flank. There were the guards and some other regiments at London, but the loyalty of these regiments could not be implicitly trusted, for one of them, the celebrated Black Watch regiment, was composed of Highlanders who were known to have three hundred relations in the Prince's army, and symptoms of rebellion had already appeared. It seems probable now that the Prince would have had better fortune, though he would have had more risk, if he had followed his luck and gone on. It was known that the Duke of Norfolk, Sir Watkin Wynn, Lord Barrymore, and most of the Roman Catholic nobility and gentry were anxious for the success of the Stewarts. The head of the Government, the Duke of Newcastle, was said to be "at his scanty wits' soon reached end," trembling and hesitating as to which king he should serve. The sensation in London on black Friday, the sixth of December, when the news of the Prince's arrival at Derby

became generally known, was intense. The Bank of England was paying its customers in sixpences so as to gain time and keep its money; business was suspended, and men generally "held their breath for a time." The news had been first brought to an "Assembly" party of the nobility and gentry, and they, like the company at the celebrated ball on the eve of Waterloo, melted away. If the Prince had continued his advance from Derby with the same rapidity that he had hitherto marched, he would undoubtedly have surprised the great city. The Duke of Richmond, who commanded the cavalry of the Duke of Cumberland's army, wrote a letter from Lichfield in the early morning of the fifth of December, saying he was then setting out for Coventry and Northampton, but quite despairing of doing anything to check the Prince's advance. A camp was being formed (on paper) at Finchley, but it was also asserted that King George had ordered his most precious effects on board his yachts, and they were to be ready to sail at a minute's warning. The confusion and terror in London could scarce be credited. Lord Mahon sums up the case as follows: "I believe, then, that had Charles marched onward from Derby he would have gained the British throne; but I am far from thinking he would long have held it. Bred up in arbitrary principles, and professing the Romanist religion, he might soon have been tempted to assail a people jealous of their freedom and a Church tenacious of her rights. . . . The English would have expected a much better government than King George's, and they would have a worse." There would have been "a necessity for a new revolution."

It is little use speculating on what might have been. The resolve

to retreat was kept secret, but it was acted upon, and for some distance the Highlanders, who always marched in the early morning before daylight, thought they were advancing. Their grief and indignation was intense when they found they were retreating, and they made loud lamentations as they marched. They had been sharpening their weapons and taking the sacrament during their day's rest at Derby, looking forward to and longing for the fray. Now all was changed ; discipline was relaxed, their Prince rode dejectedly behind them, instead of marching on foot at their head ; some of the country people began to take liberties with them, and that led to acts of outrage and reprisals. The glamour of success was gone, and the charm was broken, as soon as steps were being retraced. The Prince never recovered his spirits until he was over the border again, and his conduct to Lord George Murray, who was mainly responsible for the retreat, was very harsh. Lord George had promised to bring up the rear, the place of danger and difficulty, and right well did he accomplish his difficult task. Of the Prince's army that left Scotland it was computed that all but forty men returned thither. From Edinburgh to Derby and from Derby to Glasgow they marched five hundred and eighty-two miles in fifty-six days (including days on which they halted), and the Prince's major domo during that time never took off his clothes but on the one night in Manchester. If some modern Xenophon ever writes another *Anabasis*, here is the theme for another Glorious Retreat of the Ten Thousand, here in our own land, and perhaps he will eulogise Lord George Murray for the great feat that he did so well.

Lord Elcho wrote in his *Memoirs* that when he was leaving Derby, being in command of the Prince's Life Guards, a Mr. Morgan, an Englishman, came up to Mr. Vaughan, one of their officers, and, after saluting, said, "Dam me, Vaughan, they are going to Scotland." Mr. Vaughan replied, "Wherever they go I will go with them." Upon which Mr. Morgan said, with an oath, "I had rather be hanged in England than go to Scotland to starve." So he stayed in England and was hanged, and the other went to Scotland and was starved, though ultimately he escaped to the continent.

Mutiny and desertion became more frequent in all ranks as soon as the dangers increased. Ensign Maddox, of the Manchester Regiment, was contemplating desertion at Derby, saying that he could not get paid, when Captain Fletcher pulled out a handful of gold, which he gave to him, thereby privately compensating him for the arrears of his pay. Maddox was the Judas who afterwards betrayed them, or, in other words, he turned "king's" evidence at their trial.

The retreat was through Leek, Macclesfield, and Stockport. At Cheadle, in Staffordshire, Ray said they took "a rebel spy, whom they hanged on a gibbet, at Macclesfield, when an Apothecary went to the Centinel to buy the body for 4s. 6d.; the Dragoon thinking it a good price, he gave the skin to a tanner to dress, but the Hide was of so holy a nature that it would not tan nor lye under water by any weight, so that after much labour lost this Holy Hide had to be buried. This person having had a Holy Resolution to murther the King and Royal family with all other Hereticks." At a village, near Stockport, a Highlander was shot, whereupon his comrades fired the houses. On the 9th

they were back in Manchester; in Hanging Ditch some of the Whig mob "slutched" them, but ran away from further mischief. On the 10th the Prince imposed a fine of £5,000 upon the citizens of Manchester, and one of the hostages, who was seized as security for the money, was James Bayley, a merchant, living in St. Ann's Square where the Manchester and Salford Bank now stands. Mr. Bayley, or his son of the same name, had the old house, formerly standing at Groombridge, Withington; it was a curious looking house, with a flat top and double bay windows, and with a sunk fence to the road. It was pulled down about twenty years since. The Rev. James Bayley married a Miss Broome, of Didsbury; her name is inscribed on a chalice given to Didsbury church in 1813. £2,500 were raised, and the Prince's army evacuated Manchester. When leaving Salford they were shot at by a fanatic, which nearly led to the town being fired. Some young English volunteer was murdered barbarously by a woman and her son; and some zealot tried to shoot the Prince near Wigan, but mistook his person. In any of these cases if the offender was caught, and taken to the Prince, he was always released; the Prince's clemency, although he was so dejected, was remarkable. Miss Byrom noted in her Journal that "the 10th was the shortest day, though it seemed to her to be the longest. Mr. Jer Bower says he shall remember it as long as he lives." "Decber 17th," she notes, "Smoothing (ironing) all day. Old Mrs. Syddal's goods were prized (appraised) by dragoons, and mighty gruff they were. 18th. Fast day, service both ends of the day. Jany 3rd 1746. Effigy of the Prince at the Angel (the inn for the Whigs). Mr. Dukinfield, a Justice, got a gun and

shot at it, then wrung it by the nose, and his wife and daughter slapt it in the face and so on until they were tired and drunk, for the Presbyterians were at the Angel and gave the mob drink; then they hung it to the sign post, quartered it, and threw it into the fire; some one threw a piece of it into the drink, which put them in a violent passion." There is no doubt with whom Beppy Byrom's sympathies lay, and while she was noting down the fast day in Manchester, very different work was being done at Clifton between Shap and Penrith. Here some cavalry had got between Lord George with the rearguard and the Prince. The Glengarry men charged and dispersed them, taking several prisoners, amongst them being a footman of the Duke of Cumberland's, who said his master was close at hand with four thousand cavalry. Lord George sent Colonel Roy Stewart with the man to the Prince, at Penrith, asking for reinforcements. The Prince dismissed the footman, and sent back merely the MacPhersons and the Appian regiment.

The Duke of Cumberland's whole force of cavalry were now in close pursuit of Lord George, and a regiment of dragoons was despatched to cut off his retreat over Clifton Bridge. As darkness came on, with the moon shining at intervals, the attack was made, and then the Highlanders turned at bay. Lord George Murray raised his warcry of "Claymore," the order for attacking with the sword, and rushed bare-headed into the fray. With uncontrollable fury the Highlanders charged at close quarters for a hand-grip fight. Colonel Honeywood, the commander of the English, was killed almost immediately; a highly-ornamented sword of honour that he had with him being taken, and long

kept as a precious heirloom by McPherson of Cluny. The cavalry were routed and fled, the men protesting their horses were more frightened than they were at the swords and cries of the Highlanders. Lord George urgently sent for more reinforcements, as he hoped to have taken prisoner the Duke with the bulk of his officers; but the Prince was doubtful of the event, or, as some thought, jealous of his General, and did nothing but order Lord George to follow after him in his retreat to Carlisle.

In this affray it was computed Cluny lost twelve men, while a hundred dragoons were killed. The registers of Clifton Church mention ten dragoons being buried at once; many bodies were said to have been thrown into Clifton mill dam. Some Highlanders were straggling and taken prisoners; they were sold as slaves in America; and a man named Ogden, from Manchester, was cut over the head, and died in Lancaster gaol.

Thus ended what was probably the last bit of real warfare upon English soil. The Duke again kept his distance, and the Prince's army retreated into Carlisle. On the next day, December the 20th, the Prince's birthday, the Scotch army crossed the border, leaving the Manchester Regiment and also two hundred and seventy-four men, mostly Irish, under four French officers, as a garrison in Carlisle. This was a great blunder. Lord George Murray, the brain of the army, strongly advised that all the regiments should keep together, and that the fortifications of Carlisle should be blown up and destroyed. The Prince certainly seems to have been indifferent to the fate of the others. His high notions as to the divine right of kings and the duty of

subjects may have led him astray, as they so often led all his race astray, and the result was that his army was considerably weakened, and the remnant left behind was sacrificed.

The Highlanders themselves forded the Esk in grand style. Cavalry stretched across the river above the ford with the horses facing down stream, and cavalry stretched across the river below the ford with the horses facing up stream. This was done to weaken the force of the current and to catch anyone who might be washed away. The men waded through the river holding one another by the shoulders and neck, and keeping in line. Some were not tall enough to keep their heads out of the water, and had to swim or be dragged across. It was computed that at one time there were two thousand Highlanders in the water, and that all got safely across, for, although some drifted down stream, they were seized by the hair and kept afloat until they were in shallow water, the Prince himself rescuing several of them. As the various clans "gained the Scottish strand" the bagpipes struck up lively tunes, and the men danced reels to dry and warm themselves. The remainder of their eventful history is beyond the scope of this book, though we may consider the fate of the men from our own district.

No sooner had the Prince's army crossed the border than the Duke of Cumberland invested the mouldering walls of Carlisle. He unexpectedly got some cannon from Whitehaven, and the case for the besieged city was then hopeless. Foes without and dissensions within, with a prospect of famine, were more than enough to make the commandant and the citizens wish to capitulate. Colonel Townley flew

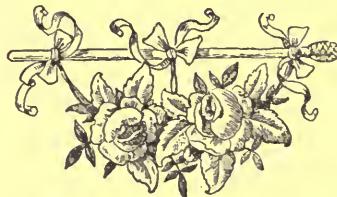
into a violent passion when capitulation was spoken of, saying “it were better to die by the sword than fall into the hands of those damned Hanoverians.” Adjutant Syddall was also strongly in favour of fighting to the last and dying where they stood, or in cutting their way out. The commandant of the city and fortress did not recognise their authority, and, being doubtless assured of the safety of himself and the citizens, he agreed to terms of surrender, and on the thirtieth of December the gates were opened and the besieged laid down their arms. About four hundred men with sixteen cannon, that had been part of the Prince’s army, were included in the general surrender, the terms of which were in writing, so that there might be no mistake on either side and that they might be referred to and adhered to. These terms were signed by the Duke of Richmond on behalf of the Duke of Cumberland, and they were, “The garrison shall not be put to the sword, but reserved for the King’s pleasure.” How the promise was kept to the chief officers, when the sword or knife ripped them up and quartered them, and what was the King’s pleasure, shall be told in the next and concluding chapter. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland well earned the title of “bloody butcher” that was bestowed on the noble and royal duke for his barbarities after Culloden. Schoolboys know how the nine of diamonds acquired the name of the curse of Scotland. The devotion and fidelity with which for five months the Highlanders kept their Prince, when the blood-money of £30,000 was on his head, and when he was “hunted like a partridge in the mountains,” having neither meat, nor sleep, nor shelter for days together, have long been the admiration of the people and one of the wonders of history.

The inscription on the sword of an officer who surrendered at Carlisle was literally fulfilled—

With this good sword thy cause I will maintain,
And for thy sake, O James, will breathe each vein.

The ghastly heads that were left to bleach and waste over the gates of Carlisle were commemorated in the Scottish maiden's lament :

His bright lang hair in yellow hanks
- Waved o'er his cheeks sae sweet and ruddie,
But now they wave o'er Carlisle yetts
In dripping ringlets, clotting bloodie.





THE KING'S PLEASURE. THE MARTYR'S CROWN.

Oh ! Had I serv'd my God with half the zeal
I serv'd my King.—*Wolsey.*



HE officers of the Manchester Regiment, when surrendering to "the King's pleasure" on the assurance "they were not to be put to the sword," probably expected the King's pleasure would be the pleasure of an English gentleman. They found it to be the pleasure of a German ogre. It would be much too flattering to write of it as the pleasure of a brute, for, excepting the tribes of cats and weasels, there are few brutes that take pleasure in suffering, or in needless cruelty. I have known a rat (a Hanoverian rat, as the common rats were called) kill twenty-six chickens in a night, and store them away, but that might have been a justifiable laying-up of a store of food against a time of scarcity. It is said that hyænas dig into graves and devour the bodies therein, but that also is simply one of their ways of obtaining their food. The brutes do not as a rule exercise

unnecessary cruelty ; they are far exceeded in brutality by the revolting revenge that was taken on the officers of the Manchester Regiment by the ogre King, when he had his pleasure on them.

His Most Sacred and August Majesty, King George II., the Defender of the Faith, and the Head of the Church, was sullen, grasping, and revengeful by nature, and his German mistresses would not improve him, for they, being the latest additions to the proud aristocracy of England, would naturally be very jealous of anything that might tend to sending them and their King back to their poor relations in Hanover. Consequently the German's pleasure took the following peculiar form.

Immediately upon the surrender the garrison of Carlisle were imprisoned in the Cathedral, from whence they were sent to London under a strong guard. The officers were put on horses with their legs tied under the horses' bellies, and their arms were pinioned, the horses being tied together by their tails and heads. The position of the officers when riding in this manner would be simply one of torture and much more fatiguing than walking, though it was according to the King's pleasure. The men were on foot, pinioned and tied together by ropes, being also tied to mounted dragoons, and in this manner they set out from Carlisle on January 20th, in the midst of winter, for the long march to London. The fatigue and exposure were likely to kill all but the hardest and toughest, and fortunate indeed were those who died on the way. Dr. Deacon's second son soon died. The trial of the survivors began on July 16th, 1746, and lasted three days. They were adjudged and sentenced "to be severally hanged by the neck, not till they were

dead, but cut down alive, then their bowels to be taken out and burnt before their faces, their heads to be severed from their bodies, and their bodies to be severally divided into four quarters and these to be at the King's disposal." Captains Moss* and Holker, of Manchester, had escaped from Newgate prison. Captain Moss had made a hole in the wall and got out. He then returned for Holker, who was a stouter man, and for whom they had to enlarge the hole. The two were hidden for six weeks by a woman who kept a greengrocer's stall. Eventually they got off to France, where at Rouen Holker worked a cotton mill, and, like other Manchester spinners, made a large fortune. The friends of Captain Fletcher, who was the sole support of his widowed mother, made great intercessions for him and begged of him to turn King's evidence and save his life, but, "great as was his affection for his mother, whom he constantly bewailed as being the unhappy cause of her grief," he manfully refused the ignoble offer. The man whom he had paid out of his own pocket at Derby, Ensign Maddox, turned King's evidence and incriminated his comrades. The bloody sentence of the King's pleasure was carried out on nine of the officers on July 30th. They were dragged on three hurdles from the gaol at Southwark to Kennington Common, where a gallows had been erected and large fires kindled that crackled and blazed round the doomed men, all being strongly guarded by a circle of

* In 1723, John Moss, of Manchester, also John Warren, of Poynton, Humphrey Trafford, of Trafford, and William Hulme are appointed executors under the will of Anthony Barlow, of Barlow, Esq., two of whose sons had been attainted of high treason. Thomas Moss was executor and trustee of the Broomes.

soldiers. Here the officers were hanged, drawn, and quartered; that is to say, they were hanged until they were nearly dead; then they were cut down and ripped up, their heart and bowels being taken out and burnt before their faces; then their heads were cut off, and they were cut into quarters for the King's disposal. The Colonel was the first to be "turned off" after they had been kept waiting half an hour enjoying the prospect. He was hanging about five minutes and was then cut down and stript. As life was not extinct his head was severed with a cleaver, then his giblets, *i.e.*, heart and liver, were taken out with the bowels and thrown into the fire, the executioner and guards religiously exclaiming, "God save King George."

His Religious and Gracious Majesty had pleasure in such barbarities, but ordinary mortals had various degrees of compassion or abhorrence. As the smell of burnt flesh diffused itself over the crowd some went home sick at heart and wanted not their dinner on that day. Some would mock, and others cry out to the executioner not to bowel them before they were dead; but the executioner had to obey the King's pleasure, besides having twenty guineas and the clothes of the victims for his trouble.

The names of the officers of the Manchester Regiment, who thus suffered martyrdom, were: Colonel Francis Townley, Captain George Fletcher, Captain James Dawson, Captain Thomas Theodorus Deacon, Volunteer David Morgan (a barrister), Adjutant Thomas Syddall, Lieutenant Thomas Chadwick, Captain John Berwick, and Captain Andrew Blood. The first and last were Roman Catholics. They were not all connected with Manchester, though most of them were, and they

wrote "papers" called "The Last Dying Speech and Confession," which were given to the Sheriff, or thrown among the crowd. They all maintained the justice of their cause, and some referred to the broken promise made to them when they surrendered at Carlisle, and to the King's pleasure. The following are extracts from the papers of those men who had some connections with Diddisburye:—

"A Copy of the Paper delivered by Mr. George Fletcher to the Sheriff of Surry, at the Place of Execution, on Wednesday, July 30, 1746.

"By the Permission of the Almighty, and the Power of an usurped Government, I am brought to this Place, in confident Hopes (thro' the Merits of my dear Saviour) that it is the Ladder by which I shall ascend to the Mansions of Eternal Bliss.

"My Religion is that of the Church of England, as it stood in its Purity, before the People were taught to pray for Curses upon their Country, and to invoke Heaven in Prejudice of that King and Family which alone can save this Guilty Land. Of this Church I die a sincere, tho' an unworthy, Member; and from this Church I learnt the true Principles of Loyalty and Justice.

"I am so well assured that the Cause for which I suffer is Divine, that I rejoice in what I have done, and could wish to live for no better Purpose than to be Instrumental in Restoring my Lawful Sovereign, King James the Third, to the Throne of these Realms; which, as it is his undoubted Right, so it is the Duty of every Englishman to hazard his Life in procuring it for him.

"To aim at any Description of the Royal Leader, the Prince of Wales, under whose Banner I heartily enlisted, would be an Injustice,

because the Subject is too sublime for those of a much better Capacity than falls to my share; but the Idea I have of his Greatness and Goodness forces me to say of him, that he only wants to be known, in order to put an End to this wicked USURPATION; which, if not put an End to, will soon determine in the absolute Ruin of poor Old England.

“It is to God's Mercy I owe my Principles of Religious Loyalty, for which I praise and adore his holy and ever blessed Name; but how can I express my Thankfulness for the Abundance of his Grace bestowed upon me, when I rejected the Offer of Life upon wicked Terms when I was a Prisoner in Newgate! There it was proposed to me (by Mr. Carrington, one of the Elector of Hanover's Messengers) to save my Life by turning Evidence against my dear Fellow-Prisoners; but by the Blessing of God, I abhorred the Thoughts of involving myself in the Guilt of shedding innocent Blood, and preferring the Honour of the Gallows to Life basely obtained, I rejected the Tempter with an honest Scorn. This has been imputed to me as a Fault by my MURDERERS, and is an Ingredient in that Malice which pursues me to the End of Life; but in this they have done me a Kindness they little intended, and preferred me to a Death, which, I verily believe, will be happier in its Consequences, than any that might have overtaken me in the Course of Nature: Blessed be the Eternal God for his gracious Goodness towards me, for without his divine Assistance I must have given Way to so great a Temptation.

“I heartily forgive all my Enemies for the Persecutions I have undergone, and which will now be at an End; for, I trust in Heaven, I

shall soon be compleat in Joy: And I pray God that my Blood may not rise in Judgment either against the Government by whose sham Authority I was tried, the Jury that gave their Verdict against me, (when there was the fairest Opportunity to acquit me, if they had been indued with the least Shadow of Humanity) or the pretended Court who pronounced the BLOODY SENTENCE.

“And I earnestly pray the Father of Mercies that he will be pleased to open the Eyes of all Englishmen that they might see the Blessings designed them by that Attempt in which I thank God I had a Share; for if they knew their own Interest, I and my honest Fellow-Sufferers should not be brought here to die for doing our Duty. But I hope there are still some virtuous People remaining unpersecuted to intercede with Heaven to save a Bleeding Country.

“Such I desire the Prayers of for my departing Soul, beseeching Heaven to accept my Sufferings as an Atonement for all my Sins, thro' the Merits and Intercession of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

“GEORGE FLETCHER.”

“Wednesday, July 30, 1746.”

Syddall wrote a much longer paper, of which the following are extracts:—

“Friends, Brethren, and Countrymen!

“Since I am brought here to be made a Sacrifice for doing the Duty of a Christian and an Englishman, it may be expected I should give some Account of myself and the Cause for which I suffer. This Expectation I will gladly indulge: and I wish the whole Kingdom

might be inform'd of all that I now say, at the Hour of Death, when there is the least Reason to doubt my Sincerity.

"I most humbly and heartily offer up my Praises and Thanksgiving to Almighty God, that He hath been pleased, of his great Goodness, to give me Grace to follow the pious Example of my Father, who, induring Hardships like a good soldier of Jesus Christ, was Martyr'd under the Government of the late USURPER, in the year 1715, for his Loyal Zeal in the Cause of his Lawful King. . . . Neither was I tempted to enter into the Army commanded by the Prince of Wales by any ambitious or self interested views. I was easy in my circumstances, and wanted no addition of Riches to increase my Happiness. My desires were limited within reasonable Bounds; and what I thought I had Occasion for (I bless God) I was able to procure: and to make my Joy as full as in this World ought to be wish'd, I was bless'd with an excellent, faithful, religious, loving Wife and five Children, the tender objects of our Care and Affection. In this Situation I was void of Ambition, and thankful to God for his Gracious Disposal of me.

"My motive for serving in the Prince's Army was the Duty I owe to God, the King, and the Country, in endeavouring the Restoration of King James the Third and the Royal Family, which I am persuaded is the only human Means by which this Nation can ever become great and happy. . . . The young Prince is too Great and Good to stoop to a Falsity, or to impose upon any People a Prince bless'd with all the Qualities which can adorn a Throne, and who may challenge his Keenest Enemies to impute to him any vice which can Blacken his

Character, whom to serve is a Duty and a Pleasure, and to Die for an Honour. . . . If I might presume to say that the Gallant good Prince hath any Fault, it would be that of an ill-tim'd Humanity: for if he had been so Just to Himself and the Righteous Cause wherein he was ingaged, as to have made Examples of some of those who betray'd him, in all human Probability, he had succeeded in his Glorious Undertaking, and been reserv'd for a Fate to which His unequalled Virtues justly intitle him.

"I solemnly declare, in the Presence of Heaven (where I hope shortly to be), that Mr. Samuel Maddox perjured himself at the Trials. To this sin of Perjury he hath also added the odious Crime of Ingratitude, for to my own Knowledge he was kept from Starving by me and the very People against whom he has falsely sworn, while in Prison, when nobody else would assist him.

"I forgive all who had any Hand in the scandalous Surrender of Carlisle. . . . I also forgive the pretended Duke of Cumberland for his dishonourable and unsoldierly proceeding in putting Us to Death, in Violation of the Laws of Nations, after a Written Capitulation to the contrary, and after the Garrison upon the Faith of that Capitulation had surrendered the Place, and faithfully performed all the conditions required of them.

"I pray God to forgive and turn the Hearts of the Bishops and the Clergy, who, prostituting the Duty of their Holy Profession, have departed from their Function as Messengers of Peace, and scandalously employed themselves in their Pulpits to abuse the best Prince, ingaged in the most Righteous Cause in the World. The credulous deluded

mob, who have been thus set on by their Teachers, I also pray God to forgive, for the barbarous insults I received from them when in Chains ; Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do !

“As I have before given Thanks to Almighty God, for the Example of my Honest Father ; so I beseech Him, that the same Christian Suffering Spirit may ever be in all my dear Children ; praying that they may have the Grace to tread the same dangerous Steps which have led me to this Place ; and may also have the Courage and Constancy to endure to the End, and despise Human Power, when it stands opposed to Duty.

“I pray God of His great mercy and Goodness, that He would be pleased to pour down the choicest of His Blessings upon the Sacred Head of His Majesty King James the Third and his Royal Sons, and for the sake of Justice and the Love which Nature and Duty prompt me to bear my Native Country to restore them soon to their Lawful, Natural, and Undoubted Rights.

“It would be an unspeakable satisfaction to me if my manner of Dying or anything I now say would contribute to the removing those unhappy and unreasonable Prejudices with which too many of my countrymen are misled. Danger of Popery, and Fear of French Power, are the idle Pretences that wicked and ill designing men make use of to misguide and stir up the Passions of unwary tho' perhaps honest People. But, if Englishmen would seriously reflect, that those who keep the most Noise about Popery, are remarkably void of any Religion at all, and dissolute in their Morals ; that Atheism, Infidelity, Profaneness, and Debauchery, are openly avowed and practised, even within the walls of

that very Court, whence they derive all their fancied Civil and Religious Liberties, if they would reflect when they talk of French Influence that they seek Protection from a German Usurper: if they would reflect that I and my Fellow Sufferers are now Murder'd in order to weaken the Cause of Loyal Virtue, &c. . . . It would be uncharitable, and misbecoming a dying man, to wish even his most inveterate Enemies to continue in such a situation, and I therefore pray God to deliver all Englishmen therefrom.

“If, my dear Countrymen, you have any Regard to your own Happiness, which, in Charity, I have endeavour'd to point out in my dying Moments; let me beseech you, in the name of God to restore your Liege Sovereign, and with Him the glorious Advantages of an excellent Constitution under a Lawful Government. This is every Man's Duty to Aim at: And if your honest attempts should fail, remember, it is a great blessing to Die for the Cause of Virtue; and that an Almighty Power can and will reward such as suffer for Righteousness Sake.

“To that God, infinite in his Goodness, and eternal in His Providence, I commend my Soul; imploring His Forgiveness of all my Sins; and hoping for a speedy Translation to eternal Joy, through the Merits and Sufferings of Jesus Christ. Amen! Amen! Amen!

“THO. SYDDALL.”

Dawson wrote: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness' Sake: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

“Friends, Brethren, and Countrymen, . . . I am now on the very last scene of Life, and shall in a very few Minutes launch into

Eternity. I therefore solemnly declare, as I shall answer it at the Awful and Impartial Tribunal before which I must shortly appear, that I firmly believe, and in my Conscience am persuaded, that James the Third is my only true, lawful, and indisputable Sovereign; that the present Possessor of his Crown and Kingdom is an Intruder and Usurper; that my taking up Arms against Him is so far from being a Crime that it is my indispensable and bounden Duty, and that if I had ten thousand thousand lives, I ought sooner to devote them all to my King and Country's service than to see Right overpowered by Oppression or Rebellion prevailing o'er Justice.

“I die, my dear friends, in the Fellowship and Communion of the Church of England and in perfect Peace and Charity with all men. I humbly ask Pardon of all those whom I have in any shape or in any manner injured, affronted, or offended, as I do from the bottom of my Heart forgive all my Enemies, Persecutors and Slanderers, and in an especial manner Mr. Maddox, who has not only sworn away mine but several other innocent persons' lives—a very unchristianlike Return for relieving and supporting him when destitute of almost every Necessary of Life. I sincerely and unfeignedly forgive the Fetches of the Counsel, the Partiality of the Judges, and the misguided Zeal of the Jury. Lay not, O God, my Blood to their charge, neither let this my Murder ever rise up in Judgment against them. Forgive them, my Father, for they know not what they do.

“And now, O my God and merciful Father, let me supplicate Thy Mercy for my poor unworthy Self. I now, with all Humility, prostrate myself before Thee, and beseech Thee, of Thy infinite Goodness, to

deign to forgive me all my Sins, Negligences, and Ignorances; excuse the Frailties and Infirmities of my Nature, and pardon every Levity, Excess, and Indecency which I have committed against Thy divine Majesty. Plead Thou my Cause, O my sweet Saviour, and let not the Transgressions of my Youth or the Faults which I have been betrayed into either thro' Fear, Forgetfulness, or Surprize ever be alledged against me at the Great Day of Judgment. . . . Into Thy Hands I commend my Soul; make me to be numbered with Thy Saints in Glory everlasting. Amen.

"JAMES DAWSON."

The connection of James Dawson with Didisbury is very slight. We only know that he was the brother of Mrs. Broome,* of Didisbury, and the son of a Manchester man. He was of St. John's College, Cambridge, and his case is far more widely known than that of any of his fellow sufferers through Shenstone's pathetic ballad of "Jemmy Dawson," from which I extract the following verses:—

Young Dawson was a gallant boy,
A brighter never trod the plain;
And well he lov'd one charming maid,
And dearly was he lov'd again.

One tender maid, she loved him dear,
Of gentle blood the damsel came;
And faultless was her beauteous form,
And spotless was her virgin fame.

* Many years afterwards Miss Broome married the Rev. James Bayley, grandson of the James Bayley the hostage, who raised the money levied by the Prince on Manchester.

But curse on Party's hateful strife,
That led the favour'd youth astray;
The day the rebel clans appeared,
Oh, had he never seen that day!

How pale was then his true love's cheek,
When Jemmy's sentence reach'd her ear;
For never yet did Alpine snows
So pale or yet so chill appear.

• • • • •

She follow'd him, prepar'd to view
The terrible behests of law;
And the last scene of Jemmy's woes,
With calm and steadfast eye she saw.

Distort'd was that blooming face,
Which she had fondly loved so long;
And stifled was that tuneful breath
Which in her praise had sweetly sung.

And sever'd was that beauteous neck
Round which her arms had fondly clos'd;
And mangled was that beauteous breast
On which her love-sick head repos'd.

Amid those unrelenting flames,
She bore his constant heart to see;
But when 'twas moulder'd into dust,
"Yet, yet," she cried, "I follow thee.

My death, my death alone can show
The pure, the lasting love I bore.
Accept, O Heaven! of woes like ours,
And let us, let us weep no more."

The dismal scene was o'er and past,
The lovers' mournful hearse retir'd;
The maid drew back her languid head
And, sighing forth his name, expir'd.

I cannot find the lady's name, although there are several accounts of her hiring a carriage and being as near to the last bloody mangling of her lover as she could be. The shock killed her. Her last words, when his heart was thrown into the fire, were said to have been: "My dear, I follow thee—I follow thee. Sweet Jesus, receive our souls together." It was said they were to have been married on the day on which he was executed, or murdered, either term being used by the opposing political parties. Dr. Deacon's third son also saw the last of his brother, another brother having died on the way from Carlisle. The head of Thomas Theodorus Deacon was stuck up on the Manchester Exchange with the head of Syddall, and as most Manchester men are aware, old Dr. Deacon stood bareheaded gazing on the ghastly remains of his son. The tyrant did as he pleased, and English dragoons were set to guard the heads, but they could not stop the Tories reverentially saluting "the martyrs" as they passed; and it was even said that Mrs. Syddall brought her son to gaze on his father's head, as his father had gazed on his father's head, when it was gibbeted in Manchester thirty years before, and that when the next rising should take place there would be another Tom Syddall ready. Fortunately there was no more political blood-shedding in Manchester for seventy-three years, and in the meantime the ill-fated Stewart race died out. The handsome, gay, and gallant Prince Charles Edward, who, like Charles I., Mary Queen of Scots, and others of his ancestors, had fascinated so many in his youth, was overcome with adversity, and he gradually sank lower in his age, leaving no legitimate son to succeed him. Voltaire, the free-thinking Frenchman, said: "If anything could justify those who believe in an unavoidable

fatality, it would be the series of misfortunes which, for the space of three hundred years, have befallen the house of Stuart." A Dr. King has also told how in after years some Jacobites tried hard to persuade the Prince to leave his mistress and to make another attempt to regain the crown, when one of them named McNamara said, "What has your family done, sir, thus to draw down the vengeance of Heaven on every branch of it through so many ages?"

The families of Syddall and Fletcher were certainly connected with the old parish of Didsburye as it was in 1745. The Syddalls owned (and I believe the family still own) Slate or Slade Hall, the old black and white house near Rushford, where the Slate lane or Burnage lane joins the Manchester and Stockport road. Heaton with Levenshulme and Reddish district was not detached from Didsbury until 1765, and in the registers of Didsbury Church I was pleased to find what I have no doubt is the entry of the marriage of this Thomas Syddall. It is as follows: "Oct., 1730. Thomas Siddall and Maria Fletcher de Burnage and paroch. Mancun. conj. matri per License. Rog. Bolton, surr."

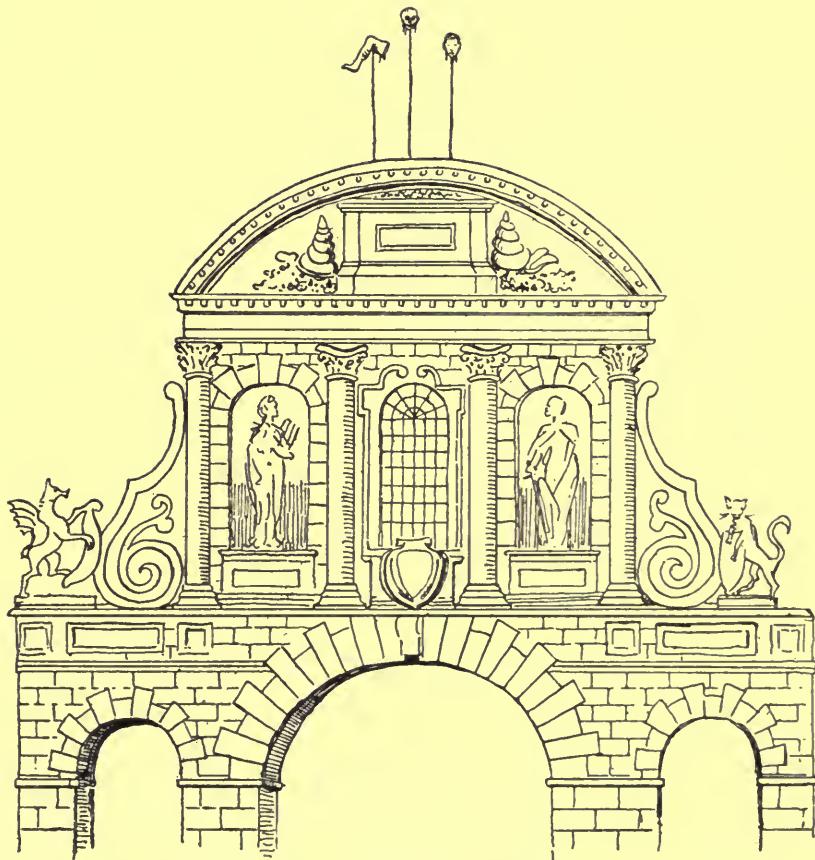
We know from Syddall's paper that he left a faithful loving wife and five children, the tender objects of their care and affection, for he prayed God to give to these children the same courage and constancy to endure to the end, and to despise human power when it stands opposed to duty. It is probable the other sufferers left no children. George Fletcher was not married; he lived with his mother, and his father had long been dead. I think it is most probable he was brother to Mrs. Syddall; she is described above as of Burnage, thereby implying that her father was dead. George Fletcher's father must have

left him fairly wealthy, and I believe he was one of the family who lived at The Old Fold, on the border of Heaton and Burnage. The Fletchers had owned a deal of land in Heaton and Heaton Wood, being that part now called Heaton Mersey, adjoining Didsbury and Burnage. The older branch of the family had lived at The Wood House until another George Fletcher built Longfield, where he lies buried in the garden.

The lands have long since been alienated, and the old thatched black and white houses of The Old Fold and The Wood House have been destroyed. There is an entry of baptism in the Church registers which may or may not be that of Captain George Fletcher ; it certainly corresponds to his age. It appears to have been written by an almost illiterate man and interpolated among the adjoining entries. It is dated 1720, "Gorge, son of Gorge Flecher, Heatton." As there were undoubtedly several George Fletchers living about that time, I looked up the entries for a preceding generation, and found that in fifteen consecutive years there were nine or ten Fletchers who brought between twenty and thirty children to be christened, and five of these children were called George. It was therefore hopeless to disentangle the various entries, but another still older entry, having some slight connection with the present subject, is worth recording. In 1575, George Siddall is married to Margaret Fletcher. It is strange how the name George as a family name of the Fletchers has died out in this century. It may be because one George was called a rebel and another George devised the estates from the family, and therefore the name as a family name was not continued.

To gratify the pleasure of His Most Sacred Majesty the King, the heads of the officers were preserved in spirits and publicly exhibited, the chief ones being reserved for the chief cities. The heads of Colonel Townley and Captain Fletcher had the honour of being reserved for Temple Bar, where in an adjoining shop an enterprising optician made a fortune by allowing his customers the use of a telescope for so much per peep at the bloody bleaching heads. The family of Colonel Townley are said to have stolen his head one stormy night and to have kept it ever since. Some accounts say that Captain Dawson's head also was stuck up in London. Syddall's and Deacon's were on the Manchester Exchange. Altogether there were about eighty gibbeted about the country, including Captain Bradshaw, a Manchester man, who had not stayed in Carlisle but had been taken after Culloden; and also including the Rev. Thomas Coppock, the Chaplain of the regiment. This reverend gentleman had actually played the Jacobite song or hymn, "The King shall have his own again," on the organ in Carlisle Cathedral, when a prisoner in the sacred edifice, so it was plain that he was past praying for; there was no hope for him. He was tried when in his gown and cassock, bowelled, and gibbeted in Carlisle. Well might one of the sufferers complain: "For the sake of doing what I thought in my Conscience I ought to do, I am brought here to the Slaughter. . . . Gracious God, deliver all Englishmen from this Hanoverian clemency. Here is an end to the Rage and Malice of my enemies, which I thank God can go no further. Here all their Power ceases."

Sir Walter Scott has written history and fiction about the men who were "out in the forty-five." Some of them he knew personally; and he



Temple Bar with the heads of Colonel Townley
and Captain Fletcher and somebody's leg ♦
From a print of Hogarth's ♦

recites that, even in his day, and in the best society of Edinburgh, it was considered very bad manners to speak of rebels, or of the Pretender. Men might speak of the King, but as long as the King was not named, they might mean either party, and the company quietly ignored the phrase or interpreted it according to their own inclinations. One old gentleman in Perthshire spoke of the King as the K, even as late as the latter days of George III. The old King heard of it; he was then near to his dotage, a decent, stupid, respectable old man. He commissioned the member for Perthshire to carry his compliments to the steady Jacobite—"that is, not the compliments of the King of England, but those of the Elector of Hanover, and tell him how much I respect him for the steadiness of his principles."

Sir Walter himself must have been a Jacobite by nature. His fondness for the old families, and his reverence for the past, with its varied associations, seem to have struggled with prudence and policy, and as in his day the long struggle was over, he sided with those who had won and were reigning. There is no doubt it paid him to do so, but what a mistake it seems now when all are past and gone; for, in his own words, "The Jacobite enthusiasm of 1745 afforded a theme perhaps the finest that could be selected for fictitious composition founded upon real incident." Fancy the great Scott, the Wizard of the North, almost worshipping His Sacred Majesty King George IV., even after that August Head of the Church had been warned off Newmarket Heath, as not being good enough to associate with racing men. History relates how Sir Walter treasured the glass out of which his Gracious Sovereign had been drinking (although he had drunk out of a good many glasses

in his time), that he put the glass in his pocket, and then sat upon it and broke it. A very proper ending.

The student of history cannot help admitting that the Stewarts were the rightful Kings of England according to the statutes of the realm, the law of primogeniture, and the divine right of kings. The Electors of Hanover received the crown because the majority of the people of England wished them to have it, and thought that under them they would have more freedom and toleration. The kings from Hanover took all they could get, but they only got the crown by the will of the people, and if the day comes when the majority of the people of Great Britain say they are tired of kings, and they will have no more of them, the descendants of these Georges will only be relinquishing what was given to their ancestors. They will not have any right to compensation for vested interests or right divine, when those who gave and elected cease to give or to re-elect.

If a student of history simply strives to learn from the teachings of history, to learn from the past what is likely to be the best for the present, and for the future, he may learn some lessons and arrive at some conclusions that would have shocked him, and have appeared impossible at one time. For instance, a young man, brought up in the strictest, straitest sect of the Tories, taught to look upon all Radicals or Dissenters as something to be shunned and avoided, finds that the Radicals and Chartists of his youth are classed with the High Church Tories of previous times, and all alike are designated "rebels." The same term being used for the old Tory and the new Radical, for they are both

antagonistic to the government, although they are opposed one to another.*

The young Tory referred to may then be thrown into the society of Radicals and Chartists by the exigencies of business, and by the stern necessity of making his living. He may then find, as I have found, more Chartists than one who had suffered long terms of imprisonment for their advocacy of advanced views, and yet were considered by those who knew them best to be very decent, respectable men. It is a great advance in the education of a Tory to be convinced that a Radical may be what is termed a "really decent chap," after all. The extremes are meeting. Twenty to thirty years ago, in Manchester and the neighbourhood, there were several old Chartists who had been imprisoned and suffered in various ways for their opinions, who, as old men, were keeping provision shops, and were prosperous and respected. In the back parlours behind their shops they were "rebels" still, but age had made them more cautious, and the times were more tolerant. Then what about those other "rebels," our great grandfathers, the men who were "out in the forty-five;" were they wrong or right? Must we say with Shakespeare,

A plague upon both your houses,

or—

Master, go on, and I will follow thee,
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty.

* A typical Irishman landing in America, when solicited for his vote, asked if there was a government; on hearing there was one, he replied at once, "Then I'm agen it." The poor Irishman had not studied history, but he had been governed by the priests, aided by the police.

The cynical jingling rhyme may arise in the memory :

Treason cannot prosper.
Would you know the reason?
For, if it should prosper,
It would not be treason.

These men, our kinsmen and neighbours, did they worthily suffer for their misdeeds, or did they win the martyr's crown? Their love and their hate have long since perished. They must have drained the cup of bitterness to the very dregs. They left their mother, or their children, or their lover, when in the prime of their life and in the vigour of their days, when every moment of mere living was a joy. They went with firm, strong step to the torture, the torture that was to end only with death, because they did what in their conscience they thought they ought to do. They prayed that others should endure to the end as they had done, and despise human power when it stands opposed to duty. They forgave their enemies, and they thanked God that "here their power ceases." To the everlasting shame and disgrace of George II., let it be known that this was his pleasure on officers and gentlemen who had surrendered to his officers, on the written promise that their lives should be spared and "they reserved for the King's pleasure."

As a tale that has been told, this rambling record of Didisburye in the '45 must draw to an end. The time may seem very very long ago, and yet there are links that bind it to the present. There were men and women living then who have told their tales to men and women who are living now. Some of those who were young then, and witnesses of these things, have told them to some who are living now, although one



The Grandmother,
WHO WAS BORN IN 1729, IS REMEMBERED BY



Her Granddaughter,
Who is now (December, 1891) living at Didsbury.

"A calm old age, serene and bright,
And lovely as a summer night."

hundred and forty-six years have passed away. This year, since beginning this work, I have followed to his grave in the old chapel yard at Blackley an old man, aged ninety, who had often been told by his grandfather of what he had seen of the Highlanders in the '45. Here are the pictures of an old lady and her granddaughter, who in our own home and neighbourhood may be said to connect the present with the past. The grandmother, Nancy Fletcher, who at Bradshaw Hall, Cheadle, brought up a numerous family, was born in 1729, and she is remembered by her granddaughter, who, thank God, is living still, in 1891, with eye undimmed and natural force unabated. My great grandfather, John Fletcher, was the husband of Nancy and the cousin of Captain George. These are links that bind the present generation to those who witnessed some of the deeds in the '45: may they long remain unsevered. How immeasurably greater is the freedom of the people now than it was then may be judged by the fact that men who conscientiously believed they were doing their duty to their country, to their King, and to their God, might be butchered with horrible barbarity, after due process by law, and might vainly ask not to be bowelled before they were dead.

When our great grandfathers saw the bleeding heads of their kinsfolk and friends, held up as traitors and rebels to be baited by the rabble's curse, and they had known their kinsmen to be honourable gentlemen, what account could they give to their children and grandchildren of the good old times when they were young? With what prudent and evasive answers an old man would meet the persistent enquiries of youth. The son might ask the sire:—

“But what did they cut them up for, fayther?”

“Because it was the King’s pleasure, my boy.”

“Then what’s the use o’ Kings, fayther?”

“Why, lad, Kings are to rule over us and take the taxes, of course.”

“But who wants em to rule over us an take th’ taxes?”

“Be quiet, lad, and let the Kings a be.”

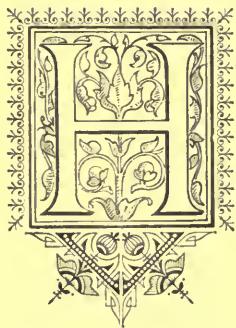
“I’m not touching th’ King, fayther. But what’s the good of ‘em?”

“Husht, lad, or happen they’ll bowel thee.”





APPENDIX.



AVING almost finished the MS. of this work, I called upon an old woman whom I had not yet called upon, and who I was told might probably give me some additional information. The result was so surprising, that, instead of making sundry additions to that already written, I thought it better to give the old lady's legends in an appendix, and as nearly as I could recollect them in her own words.

“I dare say I can tell you as much about Didsbury as most of folk, for I were born at the farm again the church, where Highbank now stands, an our family have lived in th’ parish for above three hundert years that they could trace. They did ner always live in one house, mind; part o’ th’ time they lived at th’ Goosecroft, that’s where they call Barlow Moor now; they came from Birch, near Manchester, at first. They were always queer folk, th’ Birches were, rayther too fond o’ fightin, and yet they were mostly scholars, and if onything partikler happent i’ th’ parish they’d a written it down on a bit o’ sheepskin and

a kept it; and in time them bits o' sheepskin filled an oaken chest there was, an if you'd seen them they was the best history o' Didsbury that ever was written.

“‘Did I ever see them?’ did you say? I’m like as if I could see them now; but keep quiet, Mr. Moss, an I’ll tell you all about them, though they are all gone now. Some on em went back to th’ times when Didsbury Church was made of wood and belonged to the Roman Catholics. When th’ Reformation was, we turned our religion same as the rest o’ folk turned theirs, but we allus kept Church and King men, an we’re for Church and King yet; they’d a shed the last drop o’ blood for Church and King. There never was but one Radical in th’ family, an he fought for Oliver Cromwell; his name was Thomas. Yea, there was my Uncle John, he was a Leveller; he was on the hustings with Hunt, at Peterloo; you’ve heard of that happen. Some o’ th’ Birches* fought for Charles, an when Cromwell’s men came to Didsbury Church, ours helped to beat them back; not that there was much in it to fight for, but Didsbury folk was always for Church and King.

“Did we spell our name with a *y*? Some folk spelt it *Burche*; for grandfather said that was the name of a man, but *Birch* was the name of a tree. They spell it any way now, it matters nothing nowadays how we spell it; they was better off then, and had lands of their own;

* There appears to have been several Colonels Birch in the Parliamentarian army. Colonel John Birch, from Herefordshire or Bristol, buried at Weobley, was a member of the Lancashire family. The Birches had acquired the Birch Hall estate about the middle of the thirteenth century.

there's fields in Didsbury to-day called after us, but they're gone from us.

"Can I tell you anything about the Highlanders in '45? Yes, I can tell you many things if I've time. My grandfather was a lad then; he'd used to take us childer on his knee and tell us things as happent, but when he spoke of th' rebels and beheading them, my heart failed me, and I couldn't bide to hear. I was only th' younger end of em. I wish you could a heard th' old folks. Grandfather's been dead sixty years or more, fully that; he were eighty-five, and two yards high, an as straight as a stick when he died; he lies close to your garden by th' lane side. Some of his sons were taller than him, one of em was in th' Life Guards, but they are all gone now. If he wasn't sure of the date of anything, he'd say to us, 'Thee go and fetch that bit o' sheepskin out o' th' box,' and read that, it 'll tell thi.' Some on em were very old and faded, and hard to read; th' writing was different in them days. His father was driving his cows at th' end o' Dark Lane and Birch fields when the Highlanders came up, and they took th' boots off his feet; but they was only clogs he'd made hissen, made o' wood, with a bit o' leather, so they wouldner have em, but threw them in th' river, an they went floatin down th' stream. They took all th' horses i' th' country; they couldn't take his, cos they was cows he had; he had no horses, they weren't so common then. Which way did they come? Why, they come along the old road, and he were near the back way to Parr's Wood."

I had never before heard or seen of any road in Didsbury being called the old road, but the reader who is acquainted with the district

may see it is exactly the route I had given in the fourth chapter as being taken by the Prince's army.

"The old road was called the old road by the old folks cos it used to be the old road to Manchester afore their time; it went by Boulton Wood and Slate, an what I called th' back way to Parr's Wood is by Dark Lane, it's now th' front way; things awter so. Th' Highlanders were very well behaved on th' whole, though there was a fight at Scotchcroft, for bones an things have often been found there when they've been ploughing. Kingston isn't an old name; it was Bethell's flats in my time.

"Did I ever hear of George Fletcher's head being stuck up in London? Of course I did; but I tell you my heart used to fail me at hearing o' them things. I remember old George Fletcher, that was called after his uncle George, who was beheaded; he was living when I was a girl, and grandfather used to say he was a bit proud, cos when common folk got hanged, Fletchers got beheaded, showing they was better than common folk.* He was only a littlish chap, but he thought rather much o' hissel. Then there was another man had his head taen off i' that affair. He lies i' th' church yard wi his head fastened to his body with a broad black ribbon round his neck. His name was Seymour, his head was cut off at Lancaster, or somewhere up north (perhaps Carlisle); but he was akin to us, and they brought him here, and buryet him at night, for they darednet do it openly. He lies near

* During some centuries of England's history the victims of State-Trials were allowed the privilege of being beheaded if they were of "gentle blood," otherwise they were hanged. Therefore the old lady's remark bore strong internal evidence as to the truth of her story.

th' sun dial where Phillips, of Bank top, made their vault after; he wasn't a Didsbury man, but he lies there I tell you, for he was akin to us, and was put in one of our graves. He was great uncle on the mother's side to my Aunt Nanny; her name was Hannah, and she'd married her cousin Birch, of Ardwick, and her aunt left her Seymour's picture, but she gave it away to some ladies in Manchester who wanted it badly; and our folk saw him in his coffin with th' broad black ribbon round his neck holding his head on."

Here was another surprise for me. I had never heard of this man either in history, "tradition, legend, tune, or song," and yet the old lady's tale was too precise in its details not to be true; even the man's name savoured of Church and King.

"Which side did your people take then, missus?"

"They was always for Church and King."

"But in those days it was the Church and King men that were called rebels?"

"I cannot say how that may be, I think we kept quiet that time; but we was always for Church and King." They took extreme measures to keep Seymour quiet, I thought, and as nothing further seemed to be known about him, I asked about the Duke's Hillock.

"Do I know how th' Duke's Hillock came by its name; aye, cos there were two Dukes buried there in th' time of th' rebellion. There's bin more rebellions than one, I don't know which rebellion; but there was two Dukes I've always heard."

Here again the old lady's tale agrees with what I had written,

excepting as to the burial of the Dukes, and history would almost certainly have mentioned the burial of two Dukes if it had ever taken place. The Dukes of Perth and Atholl were almost undoubtedly at Didsbury in 1745 with the Prince's army; and they, and the greater part of the army, must have rested on or about the village green, while the first rough bridge of poplar trees was being made. The date of the fall of this bridge I had found from the church registers; but the date of the fall of the next wooden bridge I had never been able to learn; a tradition said it fell in a flood time, just as old Mary Astle, of Gatley, was crossing in a higgler's cart. Now, at last, I get the desired information by learning when the third bridge was built. .

"Cheddle first stone bridge was built in 1777. How do I know? I know very well, cos my uncle William, and old Sammy Gaskill the last parish clerk, was both born i' the same year, three sevens, and they allus said it was the same year as the first stone bridge (stone, mind you) to Cheddle was built, that was 1777; and the man that built it was killed by the scaffolding falling on him as they took it down; his name wur Chandley; there's black Chandleys and red Chandleys at Cheddle still."

I had heard the red Chandleys were builders even now, and I remembered the last clerk of Didsbury as an old man, and making a small mental calculation I found the old lady was about right as to the time of his birth. Like most of the old Didsbury folk who never bothered with doctors or change of air, Sam Gaskill, the last clerk, lived to be long past the fourscore years, for I remember him and others much older than he was, regularly going to the Holy Well for the water for

their households. As in patriarchal and primitive times the villagers went to the well or spring at eventide and tarried and talked while the water flowed. It mattered nought to them that the water flowed from the churchyard, from the burial-place of their forefathers; they had always been healthy as their forefathers had been healthy, and they wanted no other water and would have no other; that always bubbled up fresh and sparkling in summer or winter, in drought or frost, and never failed. Only this week I noticed a gravestone over four of the natives, and their average age was eighty-seven. One of them was one hundred and one, and an adjoining stone recorded ninety-seven. Then I asked the old lady if she was "owt akin" to the John Gaskill who was buried at Didsbury after being shut up in Gibraltar for twenty-four years, having gone through the memorable siege of red-hot ball notoriety under General Elliott. She replied, "I don't know; th' Gaskills were ner very warlike; they were ill-tempered enoo, they were that, but they would ner fight. I can tell you a true ghost story about Didsbury that it isn't everyone knows, for th' house is haunted yet if the folks only knew that lives in it. That's the Swivel House; oh, not the one you mean; there may have been two houses called th' Swivel House. Swivels were machines, handlooms for making tapes an such like, and once upon a time there was an old man called Sam Dean lived there, who kept a lot o' swivels. He was thought to be very rich, for he was an old bachelor, but when he died th' money was missin, an a fine handsome lady, in old-fashioned dress, used to come again in the night time an 'walk' an frighten folk. Miss Nanny Broome lived there a bit, but no one would stop with her cos o' th' house being haunted. Then Mrs.

Markland came—a rich lady. That chair that you are sitting on was her mother's, so it's an old one. My mother was housekeeper for her, an there were two menservants slept in th' house, but they were feart, an my mother said it were nothing but their silly fancies; an Mrs. Markland said, ' Margaret, you may have anyone to sleep with you you like,' but she would ner. However, one morning in June, when it's mostly light aw neet, mother heard someone coming upstairs in wooden-heeled shoes, as the ladies used to wear, an then a silken gown rustled, an a fine lady, in a rich green brocade with lace, came an stood by th' bedside, although the door was fastened. Mother sat up quite calm, an they looked at one another a bit, an neither spoke. Then the lady—for she was a handsome lady, and richly dressed, according to a fashion that was old then, for mother could have told you everything she had on and what was in her hair—then the lady beckoned to her and glided backwards through the door, fast as it was, and kept on slowly beckoning, so." Then the old lady showed me how the ghost beckoned and glided backwards, and an awesome sensation seemed to come over us, as of times long since gone by. It had gradually become quite dark. "Round about the tempest thundered," for the weather was very wild and wet in the end of August, 1891. I had been sitting for nearly two hours in wet clothes in a lonesome house with an old woman, six cats, and a stuffed parrot. My two dogs had been left outside on the doorstep, and they were getting impatient; they were probably anxious to know if anything was wrong, as the smell of cats would be rather strong to them, and make them suspicious. As they whined and scratched at the door the cats became uneasy; their eyes glistened in the flickering fire-light as

they blinked and gibbered at one another. I looked to see if there was a birch broom lying handy, and at the chimney to see if there was space for a broomstick held slantwise to pass up or down, and then I wondered what would be the effect of a Paternoster said either backwards or forwards. A High Cockalorum seemed not unlikely, but overcoming such gruesome thoughts I asked if there were any ghosts nearer to nowadays. Well, it had been said that house where we were sitting was haunted, and threshing had been heard i' th' night time i' th' barn, but she had seen nothing, and the threshing in the barn was probably a dim survival of the legend of Hob the hobgoblin. The man that was murdered near to in Dark Lane some folk said used to walk; but then folk didner go that way now, since them at Parr's Wood closed the road, but she'd gone that road scores o' times, both walking and in a cart, but now she had to go round, an it made it much longer.

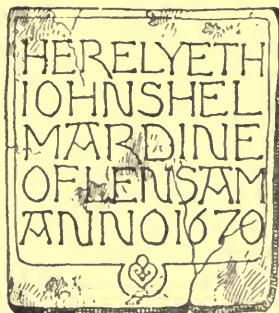
Here the old lady's folk-lore ended, for it seemed uncanny to be talking of witches and fairies as the fire burnt low and the storm got worse. Lights are not much used by those who rise at five and go to bed betimes; so, having spent a very pleasant evening, I went forth into the storm, to grope my way across the fields in as dark and wild a night as our English harvests almost ever knew. In keeping with the time, a veritable screech owl screeched its hoarse good night, as, stumbling along, I mused over many things. The old parchments, where were they? If any were in existence, I must ferret them out; but the chance of recovering any was small indeed. Does the reader remember that when Carlyle had written his "*Letters of Oliver*

Cromwell" he had ransacked everywhere and everything to find any trace of genuine information about his great hero, and when the work was published there came to him one day, from an unknown correspondent, a Copy of thirty-five letters of Oliver's, with notices of other old documents as kept by Sam Squire, Cornet and Auditor of the Ironsides. The letters Carlyle stated to have been of indubitable authenticity, the original autographs to have been worth hundreds of pounds; the Journal of an Ironside he prized as probably the most curious document in the Archives of England, not to be estimated in tens of thousands, and yet the unknown correspondent, with closed lips, with sacrificial eyes, and terrible hand and mood, sternly consumed them all with fire, saying, "Much evil here lies buried." He and his kindred had lived under the shadow of a Cathedral city for three hundred years; some had been Roundheads, some had been Royalists, and he knew what Oliver Cromwell was in the minds of the men and night birds that dwelt there, and how they might blaze up into fierce contentions; therefore he did not wish even his name to be mentioned, but to let the old sorrows and animosities be buried in kindly oblivion.

I also thought what a treasure the old documents about Didsbury, that I now heard of for the first time, might be. There was a Colonel Birch rated to the relief of the poor at Didsbury in 1655; he was probably Colonel Thomas Birch of the Parliamentarian army, and of the same family as the old lady to whom I had been talking. An endless vista of local historical discoveries seemed to unfold itself, but it was only as a dream. The bits of old sheepskin are all lost, and yet I had heard the contents of some of them, and the one relating to Seymour in his coffin,

with the black ribbon round his neck holding his head on, and his burial at Didisburye in the '45, is to me undoubtedly true.

How strange it is that this old gentlewoman should be earning her daily bread for herself and a decrepit husband by the sweat of her brow, rising at five in the morning, winter and summer, walking two miles to her work, and having done so for over sixty years, and yet her conversation is more intellectual than a deal of the empty babble and chatter that society conventionally calls conversation. Family pride and the pride of long descent have helped her in life's long struggle. The scientific philosopher would say it was a case of atavism. The old farmer would say, "th' breed 'll tell."



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The *Manchester Guardian* says:—"There are few places whose history will not be found interesting, if only you are lucky enough to meet with someone who knows all about them and is willing to impart his knowledge. These qualifications Mr. Moss undoubtedly possesses as regards Didsbury. . . . If there be such a thing as the genius of the place, he is probably better entitled than anyone else to be considered its incarnation. . . . The book is, moreover, full of salt—touches of homely and sometimes rather pungent humour expressed in racy vernacular. We rather like the flavouring."

The *Courier* says:—"In a pleasant, gossiping volume Mr. Fletcher Moss not only records his personal recollections of the Didsbury of former days, but has summoned to his aid some of the older inhabitants, and gathered from them a mass of legendary lore now fast fading from their memories, with local incidents, scraps of family history, . . . many interesting particulars respecting the church, with extracts from the registers, copies of the more notable inscriptions, remarks on the origin of the names, &c. . . . The work is pleasant, chatty, and entertaining, and cannot fail to be interesting to Lancashire men generally, and to the people of Didsbury in particular."

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